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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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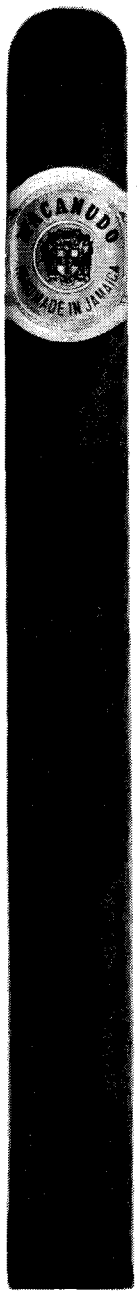

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TRB

from Washington
February 4, 1978

How to Woo Blacks

The Republicans want more black votes and I think it is up to me to help them get them. The other day the Republican National Committee heard a stem-winding speech from a black activist, the Rev. Jesse Jackson; and the NAACP has just thrown its support to the Republicans' pet energy project, deregulation of natural gas prices. It looks to me like the beginning of a wonderful flirtation.

By a coincidence the Republicans' sudden awareness of the availability of the blacks is just 10 years after publication of the red hot Kerner Report (Commission on Civil Disorders) following racial riots from coast to coast. The riots constituted what was called, "the most sustained spasm of civil disorder" in US history. They may have escaped the attention of the Republicans at the time (who were busy then, as always, preventing government interference in our daily lives). I have in front of me *Newsweek* of November 20, 1967, with a 22-page cover story and supplement, "The Negro in America: What Must be Done," and a signed editorial by the editor, Osborne Elliott. He says the time has come for *Newsweek* to offer advocacy as well as analysis. A whole lot of advocacy followed, all of it for spending more money.

The Kerner report warned that "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." It placed the blame for the situation firmly: "White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."

But surely things are better today; surely the eager Republicans don't have to get mixed up in all that racial mess to woo a few million blacks? Maybe not, but it continues an awkward issue. I and others had breakfast last week with Robert Embry, assistant secretary of HUD in charge of Community Planning and Development (who did a fine city planning job over in Baltimore). The ghetto situation is worse today than 10 years ago, he said flatly, and people are paying it less attention. Can we believe that? It sounds like an extreme statement. A public opinion survey taken by the *Chicago Tribune* in 1977 found only a minority who believed that racial discrimination still exists against blacks; according to a CBS/*New York Times* poll last October, 40 percent of respondents still thought black unemployment was no worse than for whites.

If the Republicans would take a sneak look at some statistics, however, they might come up with some sympathetic platform comments that would aid them a lot in winning black votes, particularly since most Democratic congressmen don't seem to know the situation either. To begin with, the 1974-75 recession has never really ended for the blacks. Recovery hasn't reached them yet. Black unemployment in 1977 was at the highest level ever recorded; for whites it fell from 7 percent to 6.5 percent but for blacks it stayed at an alarming 13 percent, and for black teenagers an incredible 40 percent. The income gap between races is widening and the awkward thing is that with prosperity all around them, and with a TV set in the living room, the black ghetto knows about its plight. It's our new-style discrimination. Carrying on a two-class society, one white, one black, one rich, one poor is social dynamite. It exploded 10 years ago in riots; it's smoldering today. Who knows the flash-point for this kind of social explosion anymore than for the grain dust that explodes in western silos? GOP chairman Bill Brock could drop a few commiserating "tut-tuts" about this for the blacks and—who knows—it might pay political dividends.

Of course the Republicans have got to curtail big government and support free enterprise, and denounce bureaucratic interference in private lives, but a heartfelt phrase or two might help in cuddling up to black leaders.

Here are some more promising leads: Blacks are jammed into big cities and these are increasingly nearer bankruptcy. Take public schools. Chicago's schools in 1976 were forced to close 16 days early. Cleveland's in 1977 were kept open by a judge. Toledo's schools closed for a period in October for lack of funds. In the same month Philadelphia dropped 3000 teaching positions and schools nearly closed.

New York state has 740 school districts, but 95 percent of all blacks are crowded into only 11 of them. Poor pupils in big cities (disproportionately black) are educationally short-changed. High schools are the paths to success or

(continued on page 40)

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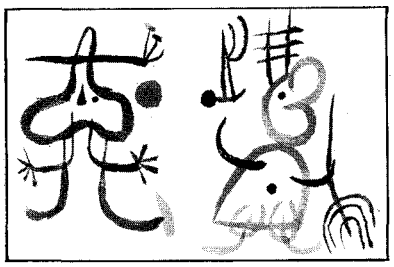

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G. Clark Sealy's original etching, *Lotus Pond.* Signed limited edition of 125.

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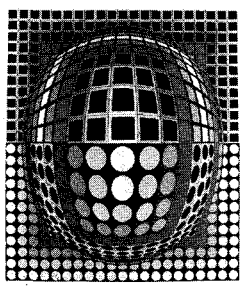

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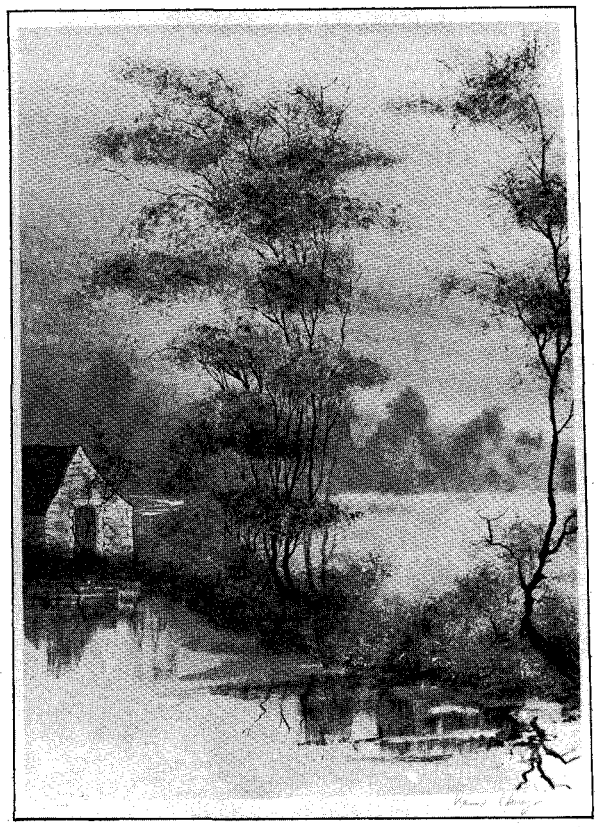

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A Journal of Politics and the Arts, Vol. 178, No. 5, Issue 3291, February 4, 1978. Published weekly (except the issues of July 15, August 12, September 2, December 30) and distributed by The New Republic, Inc., 1220 19th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20036. Phone (202) 331-7494. Single copy, $1.00; Yearly subscriptions, $24; foreign, $27; students $17.

Send all remittances and correspondence about subscriptions, undelivered copies and changes of address to Subscription Department, The New Republic, 205 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43302. Copyright 1978 by The New Republic, Inc. Item g. Second class postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Reader's Guide.

Cover: Macbeth and the Armed Head *(1793-94) by Henry Fuseli. From the Art Collection of The Folger Library, Washington, DC. Article on page 16.*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

February 4, 1978

Guns and Margarine

We have become resigned to it as a fact of nature that when it comes to foreign affairs, politicians get elected by promising one thing and do the reverse when they get into office. Wilson, Roosevelt and Johnson all pledged peace and produced war De Gaulle and Nixon—Begin, too, we hope—came to power as chauvinistic hawks, then took steps to make peace with old enemies. Nobody ever gets mad at politicians when they fail to keep campaign promises in the international field. Quite the contrary: when they do it, we call them statesmen.

However, one begins to wonder what a democratic election really is worth when the same thing happens in the domestic field. We could understand, in a divided government, how a president of one party might fail to accomplish his campaign program in battle with a Congress of the other party. That is what might have happened if Republican Gerald Ford had been returned to office. But for an "activist" Democrat to get elected on a "populist" (the man said) platform, along with an overwhelmingly Democratic Congress, and then to propose a can't-do program such as President Carter has just presented—well, that is dismally disappointing.

What do we elect Democrats for anyway? We elect them because they have a tradition of using the powers of government to correct the imbalances, evils and injustices of the capitalist economy. We elect them to ease and try to eliminate poverty. To put people to work. To innovate. To build. To experiment. To offer vision. To equalize. To liberate. To activate. We elect Republicans to cozen the business community and to inquire after its "confidence." We expect them to control government for the sake of control, to say "wait" to new ideas. To consolidate. To stabilize. To manage. We made what we thought was a straightforward choice, a year ago last November, for a Democrat who kept telling us how he remembered listening to FDR on a crackling radio during the Depression and how he revered Harry Truman. He promised, Carter did, tax reform, jobs, welfare reform, health insurance, "compassion" (we took him to mean compassion toward the poor) and leadership. After Carter's State of the Union address, economic message and budget, Senate Republican leader Howard Baker observed: "He's singing our song . . . a Republican song." That's no lie.

As Carter noted in his budget message to Congress, "the first complete budget of any new administration is its most important. It is the administration's first full statement of its priorities, policies and proposals for meeting our national needs." And, what was Carter's first priority? When he was campaigning for President, it was to reduce unemployment to four or 4.5 percent. The week after he won, he let it be known that it would take four years to accomplish that end. Now, in the new budget, Carter has declared, "I judged that the most important priority this year was to reduce the burdens on taxpayers." He claimed his $25 billion tax cut was designed to "ensure a vigorous economy, a declining unemployment rate, a strong expansion of private investment and a stable budget balance in future years." Clearly, unemployment is no longer the first priority. In fact, Carter's economic projections do not anticipate four percent unemployment until 1983.

From Treasury Secretary Blumenthal, explicitly, and from Carter, implictly, the message comes through that this administration's real top priority is to win the confidence of the business community. Carter has been chasing this chimera for a long time. In the summer of 1976, Carter no sooner had told the Democratic National Committee that the nation had for too long been suffering at the hands of a "political and economic elite," than he hurried up to lunch at "21" to assure the nation's top industrial tycoons he didn't mean *them*. Now his program calls for tax cuts to keep the country buying cars—not building railroads—and Carter is boasting that he has cut the federal budget as a proportion of GNP from 22.6 percent to 22 percent, and that it will be down below 21 percent—a magic number

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of some sort—by fiscal 1981. Is business confident? It is not. No sooner was his budget out than the stock market fell once again, and business began whining about Carter's negligible stabs at tax reform, including his 50 percent reduction in allowances for those three-martini lunches at "21."

Mercifully, Carter has backed away from his commitment to balance the budget by 1981. After this election year's tax cut—to become effective, conveniently, on October 1st—Carter forecast a possible 1980 tax cut too. Carter said he is such a tight-budget man that, had it not been for the tax cuts, "I would have been able to announce a decline in the deficit of $15 to $20 billion." Why not use tax-cut money for health insurance, for welfare reform, for large scale jobs programs? These are not Carter's priorities.

It is not as though Carter does not realize what "critical needs" the nation faces. Once he won a Democratic presidential nomination, after all. There is language in the budget acknowledging that unemployment is "unacceptably high." There is $400 million in the budget (for incentives to business) to put chronically unemployed people to work, including inner-city youths. But the funding is nowhere near enough to meet the problem, and the administration gives evidence of not knowing how the money should be spent. The same is true for urban programs.

There is a general problem for liberals and Democrats here, of which Jimmy Carter's program is more the reflection than the cause. The liberal left is spooked, in doubt about its premises and purposes. Persistent, simultaneous inflation and unemployment—"stagflation"—have undermined its faith in Keynesian economics. Many have become convinced that because Lyndon Johnson's Great Society did not achieve Utopia, it achieved nothing, helped no one. So here we have Jimmy Carter, heir to the great Democratic tradition, saying in his State of the Union message, "Government cannot solve our problems. It cannot set our goals . . . define our vision . . . eliminate poverty or provide a bountiful economy or reduce inflation or cure illiteracy or provide energy. We simply cannot be the managers of everything and everybody." For this he was thunderously applauded by a Democratic Congress. This Congress, in fact, intends to squish Carter's peanut-sized effort at tax reform and hence enlarge the size of the tax cut. The Democrats seem bereft of will and courage to use the government to solve the problems of the nation. All they can say is: give the people their money back.

Disappointed as we are with the Carter program, there is one campaign promise whose abandonment we do not protest. That is his pledge to cut $5 to $7 billion from the defense budget. Carter's new budget calls for a three percent increase in defense spending, after inflation. We put Carter's policy reversal into the category of statesmanship. Arriving in office, he was given the bitter news that the Soviet Union has been steadily increasing its defense outlays—and its power—while US expenditures have declined. In Europe Carter's advisers have told him there is a serious imbalance between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces. If a war broke out, we and our allies probably would suffer heavy losses in land, population and troops before we could begin to recover, and we might well have to use nuclear weapons. Much of Carter's defense increase is designed to bolster NATO, and we approve of it.

We take the *decision* to increase the defense budget as an act of statesmanship, but the administration's defense of it was far from statesmanlike. Instead of telling the public that an increase was needed to offset Soviet buildups, the administration argued that it did too, keep its campaign promise to cut. Administration spokesmen used the dodge that Carter was calling for $5 to $8 billion less than the Ford administration *might have* recommended, had Gerald Ford been elected.

What if Gerald Ford had been elected? We do not say that his programs would have been the same. Ford would have tried to slash social spending, we assume. His tax cut would have been even larger, perhaps, as Republicans in the Congress are now urging. Much more would have been made of the threat of inflation and even less of the reality of unemployment. There would have been no increases for civil rights enforcement or for medical care and nutrition for low-income mothers and infants. We would have protested, as we do now, about the administration's priorities. But we would not have expected as much from a Republican administration as we do from a Democratic one, and so we wouldn't feel as cheated.

And familiarity breeds contempt.

A Familiar Strategy

By all conventional standards, President Carter's series of annual reports and messages last week disclosed an economic program that must be described as liberal. Tax reductions for lower income groups are there. So are public service jobs, programs for disadvantaged youth, energy conservation, the beginnings of a reformed welfare system, subsidized housing, aid for farmers and small business, even a little tax reform. Also, the worrisome rhetoric about a balanced budget, present in many of Mr. Carter's earlier speeches, has been conspicuously dropped.

Above all, the basic economic stabilization strategy of the President's program is conventionally liberal. It is a strategy so canonized in majority thinking since the Kennedy days that it could not be ignored even by

(continued on page 8)

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Correspondence

Desperate remedies

To the editors:

John Kenneth Galbraith's informative article ("The Trouble With Economists," *TNR*, Jan. 14) bemoans the economist who settles comfortably into establishment economics, stating that to be successful in the long run requires a controversial course of action in the short run. He further says that there exists an inverse correlation between what is acclaimed for sustaining business confidence on the one hand, and actual economic performance on the other. And that time is running out. He then limits his discussion of controversy to effective policy for expanding the economy and effective action for restraining inflation, thereby falling into his own trap: He has dodged the central controversy, which is not *how* to expand the economy but *whether* to expand the economy. Here is real controversy.

I suggest along with Herman E. Daly of Louisiana State University that time is long since overdue for economists to act upon the natural limits placed on continued capital growth by the finite nature of mineral and energy resources as well as by the inviolable laws of thermodynamics. If Galbraith would like to demonstrate the ultimate controversy in the short run (and thereby prove successful in the long run!), let him champion the cause of steady-state economics. The short term consequences may appear bleak, but any other course of action seems clearly headed for total collapse.

Charles M. Anderson
Humboldt State University

To the editors:

Professor Galbraith would have made an excellent lawyer. I had to labor through seven *TNR* pages before he finally came to the conclusion that a system of income and price restraint is needed to control unemployment and inflation. Galbraith failed to explain the system although I concluded that he espouses some form of wage-price controls. Needless to say, black markets, massive bureaucracy to administer the controls and subsequent shortages would probably result.

Wouldn't it be simpler to eliminate all deductions, exemptions and credits from the impossibly complex 1040s and reduce everyone's tax rate on a sliding scale to a percentage of the adjusted gross income? During inflationary times Congress raises tax equitably across the board. During deflationary times, Congress lowers taxes to stimulate the economy. This simple fiscal technique would control boom and bust cycles without relying on the excessive use of monetary policy. Of course having Congress enact this legislation would be a difficult task primarily because it's so simple, and also has adverse political implications.

The above overly simplified plan would yield a true just tax reform that would eliminate the legal-accounting gimmicks that make a sham of our unduly complex tax code.

Monroe Stokvis
Rockville, Maryland

The Japanese way

To the editors:

Henry Fairlie noted in "An Idea Whose Time is Never" (*TNR*, Jan. 14) that the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, soon fell victim to disillusionment, and became defunct. But, even after the traumatic experience of World War II, the idealistic notion for the banning of war was not completely dead. Those Japanese who were charged in 1946 with the responsibility for drafting a new constitution exhibited no indigenous interest in that concept or inclination to restrict their national sovereignty so drastically. Yet, at the explicit, personal directive of General Douglas MacArthur, commander of the US occupation forces in Japan, a renunciation of war chapter ultimately became an integral part of the new constitution.

The rather amazing fact is that for more than 30 years the Japanese people and government have demonstrated a somewhat stoic willingness—even their good fortune—to live, one, with the dictated restriction, and, two, without a vast national, military establishment.

Leon C. Lantz
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Nixon and Ford. The strategy is to reduce taxes a bit with the expectation that this will stimulate sales, which will stimulate investment, which will reduce unemployment—but *not* fast enough to stir up inflation. It is an alluring aspiration, simple, unruffling, a kind of painless economic dentistry. It is supposed, in the end, to produce full employment without inflation.

But there are two nagging questions. Has the strategy ever worked? More important, will it work now? The answers aren't as simple as the strategy itself. The story told by history is muddied by extraneous events like the Korean and Vietnam Wars and the startling OPEC price hike of 1973. Even so, it would seem, economic expansions sparked by deficit financing in the past did proceed as scheduled for a time—though all terminated in precisely the same way. There were no exceptions. Sooner or later they generated inflations that intensified progressively until the customary brakes were applied, giving the signal for recession. The brakes, of course, are higher taxes, a cutback in government outlays or higher interest rates, or all three. They stop inflation—at least they stop it from accelerating—the hard way, by throwing men and women out of work.

But that is history, known to President Carter and known in much greater detail to his economic adviser, Charles Schultze. Surely, with this warning from the past, they must have a happier scenario in mind for the future. They do, as did Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Ford and *their* advisers. Each administration has believed itself capable of more finesse, more seasoned skill than the ones before. Business expansions were to be ever so sensitively tuned. Tomes were written by retired economic advisers about how to do it next time. The Kennedy-Johnson administrations added wage-price "guidelines" and presidential jawboning to the formula. Nixon added temporary mandatory wage-price controls. Ford supplied WIN buttons.

The contribution of the Carter administration remains to be seen. As advertised, it promises a modified version of the Kennedy-Johnson techniques. The fiscal impetus to business expansion will be especially modest. A proposed $34 billion reduction in taxes for individuals and business has been widely publicized, but perhaps as much as three-fourths of the stimulus will be offset by simultaneous tax increases, for Social Security and from various proposed tax reforms. In fact, on balance, the federal deficit is expected to decline slightly between fiscal 1978 and fiscal 1979. But that at least is consistent with the President's frank announcement, both in the State of the Union address and his economic report, that "We should rely principally on the private sector to lead the economic expansion and to create new jobs for a growing labor force." That hope may be mistaken but is not utterly forlorn. Sales and production are moving upward, and have been for two years, even though no robustly. As for inflation, a revision of the Kennedy Johnson guidelines is contemplated. Business and labo will be asked to reduce wage and price increases t something below those prevailing during the past tw years. In this way, it is anticipated, the annual rise in th consumer price index will be reduced from seve percent in 1977 to six percent in 1979. Unemployment according to the forecast of the President's advisers would drop over the same period from about 6.. percent to a hair under six percent.

These prospective accomplishments may be hailed a unspectacular, particularly since 1979 will represen the *fourth* year of "recovery" from the 1975 recession They contrast with the extravagant promises Presiden Carter has more customarily delivered.

Of course, there is nothing approaching a guarante either that the administration's policies will be put int practice or that, if they are, the announced goals will b attained. Congress may enlarge or diminish the net ta reduction; odds are, by rejecting some of the propose "reforms," Congress will expand it. Also, the current of business activity are in large measure unpredictable That much-maligned element in the economic scene "business confidence," is supremely sensitive. Con vinced of reasonable certainty in the rules of the game corporations could increase investment with ar enthusiasm unanticipated in the Carter ad ministration's present projections. Confronted with disturbing uncertainties—say in tax obligations, the specific standards for wage-price controls, tariffs import quotas, exchange rates and interest rates—business could cut outlays for plant and equipment t recession levels. Certainty about government policie is often more important to business executives thar their substance. Businessmen would not put it this way—heaven forbid!—but what business confidence needs most is a clear national economic plan, something to count on rather than capricious improvisations. The tax reforms Carter has promised have changed ir substance and number on at least three occasions in the last 12 months.

The "voluntary" wage-price guidelines incorporatec in the administration's program already have drawr fire from both labor and business. If George Meany means what he says, and he usually does, labor's cooperation will be qualified and grudging at best, if not withheld entirely. Without the willing support of the regulated, even mandatory controls would be difficult to administer. But mandatory or not—and the President has pledged to avoid compulsion—successful wage-price controls require standards that are clear and definite, and yet sensitive enough to accommodate the dynamic changes in demand and supply that inevitably arise. That is a possibility not contemplated by this administration or any previous one. It makes no economic sense to ask workers in industry A and industry B to accept the same wage increase, when in

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the first there are 100 openings for every applicant and in the second there are 100 applicants for every job.

Beyond this, the success of the President's economic policies, assuming they are adopted in full, may be jeopardized by international relations. OPEC is continuing to exact its toll on the US balance of trade with exorbitant prices utterly out of line with costs. Our own domestic oil cartel has shown little disposition to expand American production, despite the TV boasts of Exxon, Gulf, Texaco and the rest. In fact US output has been in steady decline. The President's energy plan contains no provision for altering either cartel. Instead, it concentrates nearly all its weight on the slow and unreliable process of conservation. One practically certain result in the year ahead will be new and repeated crises in the international value of the dollar. In turn, to induce foreigners to retain dollar balances, higher interest rates are more than likely. Neither condition promises tranquility in the stock market, foreign trade, or business conditions generally.

Ironically, obstacles to restraining inflation appear within the President's own program as well as in the labor and business communities it is supposed to oversee. Agricultural legislation approved last year requires a 20 percent reduction in plantings of major crops, a measure that inevitably means higher food prices. The administration's energy plan is full of new taxes on crude oil, gasoline, and autos, all of which boost costs and prices. The higher interest rates mentioned above also promise to accelerate inflation. Most often high interest rates have a perverse dual effect. They diminish profit opportunities and so discourage investment. They appear in corporate accounts as higher costs and so induce higher prices. The resulting phenomenon is known as stagflation—more unemployment *and* inflation.

That would seem to be the outlook for the years ahead—no swift, dramatic deterioration of business conditions, but no significant and enduring improvement either. The point is that unless government's approach is altered, as of course it may be, the instability of the US economy over the longer run is most likely to continue and intensify. By a long-standing American tradition, our politicians rise manfully to crises some time after these crises have made their presence unmistakably known to the majority of voters. It may be so with the gathering crisis of persistent unemployment and inflation (and, despite occasional dips, rising taxes) that lies ahead. Sooner or later the need will be generally recognized for a different public stance, substituting creative innovation and coordination for the hit-or-miss application of the tried-and-untrue nostrums of the past.

The time for change may not be hopelessly distant. A recent letter to the President signed by John Kenneth Galbraith and some other economists (including this one) reflected the point of view expressed above. So did objections to the President's program presented by Vernon Jordan of the Urban League and Leon Schull of Americans for Democratic Action. Of course one could multiply the present influence of these sentiments by 1000 and still remain, for all we know, immeasurably short of a national consensus. But then the Humphrey-Hawkins bill is now given an excellent chance for passage, with Carter's official blessing. It is diluted, even impotent, but it is worth remembering what it was diluted from. In the original bill, Humphrey had in mind a democratic planning mechanism for the American economy. So did Augustus Hawkins as well as Senators Jacob Javits and William Proxmire, Congressmen Henry Reuss and Richard Bolling and many other supporters who are still very much around. Even as it stands, the bill is a stepping stone to rational public decision-making. The prognosis suggested above is that events will overcome the government's current propensity for aimless groping, and will compel this nation to take further necessary steps.

Melville J. Ulmer

On the Hill

Not Too Taxing

The President dropped some tax reforms on Al Ullman's desk this month. Ullman jumped as if he'd been given a dead rat.

Ullman is chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and the nation's chief writer of tax codes. It is a responsibility that he and his fellow committee members would just as soon shuffle off this year. They went through an ordeal of tax revision in 1976 when they wrote a reasonably bold reform bill, only to see it shredded apart in the Senate. Some big loopholes were closed, but it was a bruising fight. Lobbyists appeared in swarms to defend special clauses worth hundreds of millions of dollars to their clients. They flogged and battered Representative Ullman. They pleaded and bullied. They walked in every open door and cudgeled every wavering congressman with expert opinion. The survivors are still suffering from shock.

Jimmy Carter released his long-promised tax plan on January 21. It's not a sweeping revision, just a solid improvement, composed mostly of ideas that have been debated many times before. A lot of it is left over from 1976. The administration is right to call it a progressive bill: it gives most relief to the poorest taxpayer, a token to the middle class (more to those with children than those without), a few plums to business. It would reduce general taxes on corporations and individuals by about $34 billion and recoup some of that loss to the

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Treasury—about nine billion dollars—by closing or tightening exemptions in the tax code.

Even before the package was out, Ullman had announced what he was going to do. He was going to toss it right back to Jimmy. In a breakfast meeting with reporters, Ullman ticked off the things he isn't interested in this year. He doesn't want to get rid of a special tax break for US export companies, called DISC, which amounts to $700 million worth of Carter's reform. He doesn't want to end the provision that lets foreign branches of US companies indefinitely delay paying tax on their foreign income—$88 million worth of reform. And he doesn't want to end the three-martini business lunch. The amount of reform in the last category isn't known. In Carter's package it's lumped together with a lot of other reforms ending business entertainment write-offs, worth $1.5 billion. After listing the items he wouldn't touch, Ullman began talking about "reforms" of his own he would like to consider, ideas Carter neglected. One complex proposal would end the double taxation of corporate dividends. No hearings have yet been held on it. If Ullman really tries to include it in the bill, deliberations on tax reform could go on for another five years. Perhaps he wanted to remind the President that there is more than one way to do nothing. Congress knows how to work up an earnest sweat on any subject, laboring night and day, and still get nowhere. That's what the Senate did with the energy bill last year. The House may do it this year on tax reform.

Just to drive the message home, Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill reiterated Ullman's point in an interview a few days later. On "Face the Nation," he told reporters that Carter would be lucky to get 50 or 60 percent of his reforms passed by the House. He didn't know what the Senate would do after that. O'Neill is the one who got the energy bill through the House unscathed. Apparently he is not going to do the same for the tax bill. Even Representative Abner Mikva, a leading reformer on Ullman's committee, said last week, "there is zero enthusiasm for tax reform among the people."

The only person with a kind word for Carter's tax plan, it seemed, was Senator Edward Kennedy. He was "pleased." He thought the bill was a "solid step" but "modest enough for Congress to deal with in 1978." When I stopped by Kennedy's office to talk with an aide (Kennedy's aides, like many on the Hill, are told they must remain anonymous so as not to blur the boss's image), the senator himself was at bay in a corner of the room. He was surrounded by marchers from the anti-abortion, right-to-life crusade. A squad of about 50 of them had charged in on short notice, and they held the senator captive for 45 minutes, debating an amendment to the Constitution that would outlaw abortion.

The right-to-lifers were one of two armies that swept through the snow on Capitol Hill last week to carry an urgent message to Congress. The other was a battalion of farmers who had come to demand that somebody do something to double their profits. No silent Americans, these. They believe that big government can help them, and they are right. Each army had its badge. The right-to-lifers wore red roses and the farmers wore baseball caps with a red-white-and-blue image of the US sewn above the visor.

Kennedy dashed out the back door at noon, and the marchers gathered up scarves, galoshes, gloves and pamphlets, leaving behind one miniature, easy-language edition of the New Testament. The aide began to explain what was going wrong with tax reform. It is a cause that makes the law fairer in general, but only by incurring a lot of specific pain. The people who get hurt tend to be rich, powerful, articulate and politically astute. They fight back. Once a tax exemption gets written into the code, whether for good or bad reasons, it cannot be removed without enraging the special industry that has grown up around it. A lot of people were enraged by the 1976 reform attempt, and they are ready to descend on Congress again if the unfinished work of 1976 is brought up for a vote. Members of the Ways and Means committee would like the issue to go away. They can't win, no matter what they do. If they vote for the reforms, the special interests will refuse to contribute to their campaigns, maybe even spend money to defeat them. If they vote against the reforms, the special interests will refuse to contribute to their campaigns, maybe even spend money to defeat them. If they vote against the reforms, a little challenger like Jimmy Carter may spring up in their district at election time and call them a corrupt incumbent.

The President's package will be the high-water mark in this year's tax reform effort. The quality of the bill will decline rapidly from here out. Kennedy believes that with a President who wants to do something, it ought to be possible to get most of the reforms through, particularly since many of these proposals failed by a few votes in 1976.

If the President doesn't make a convincing effort to win votes and present his case in the press, Congress will slink away. Everything depends on how Carter handles it, and the signs are not good. He is already burdened with a few bad failures. He may not want to get into a tax reform brawl just now. Many congressmen believe that no one at home cares whether they support the President or defy him. If things go badly for Carter this year, Congress may even try to undo some of the reforms made in 1976.

It became clear in talking with this aide and others in the House that the President will have to prove very quickly that he genuinely wants tax reform. One aide to Mikva guessed that Carter would have to show his good faith by early spring. How might he do this? By lobbying, talking about the bill in press conferences, praising and threatening a lot of scared congressmen and generally doing the same things he did on the

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energy bill, only doing it successfully.

Carter still has the energy bill and a treaty with Panama to get through Congress, a backlog that makes some people think that he's merely blowing steam when he says he wants tax reform this year. If these doubts grow stronger—or if Congress simply wants to make life easy for itself this year—tax reform will be split off from the general tax reduction, and the latter bill will be passed while the former is studied. If the tax cut goes through, without the reforms, it will hurt the President's reputation doubly. Every loophole that's left open will drive the budget deeper into deficit.

Eliot Marshall

Heads I winograd, tails you losograd.

Carter's New Rules

One day last week, President Carter entertained 750 Iowans, his earliest supporters, at the White House. They were celebrating together the second anniversary of the first-in-the-nation 1976 Iowa caucuses which gave Jimmy Carter his first boost toward the Democratic nomination and the Oval Office. Carter obviously relished reminiscing about how much the strong, early showing in Iowa had helped his candidacy. If it weren't for you, Carter told his guests, Scoop Jackson might be here celebrating with a bunch of folks from Massachusetts.

Forty-eight hours later, the Democratic party's reform commission in charge of writing rules for 1980, solidly controlled by Carter supporters and under the direction of White House aides, told Iowa it could no longer hold its traditional January caucuses. It also told New Hampshire, Massachusetts and several other states that they were starting things too early and their primaries and caucuses would have to be moved up at least to the second Tuesday in March. The idea, it is said, is to reduce the excessive media attention normally attracted by these early states and accordingly to diminish their disproportionate influence on the outcome. Shortening the process, it was also said, would help alleviate public boredom with presidential campaigns.

The reform commission's recommendations now go to the Democratic National Committee for adoption or modification. In the course of a weekend's work the commission voted a series of changes in the rules governing presidential nominations, most of those changes designed to make it a little more difficult for anyone to challenge Jimmy Carter in 1980. Of course that's not what Carter's agents on the Winograd Commission (named after its chairman, Morley Winograd of Michigan) claimed they were doing, but that's the clear effect. Take the "window" proposal, for example, which requires that all primaries and caucuses must take place between the second Tuesday in March and the second Tuesday in June. It appears merely to shorten a process that many people think drags on too long, apparently a politically neutral proposition. But anyone who challenges an incumbent President in his own party suffers from a presumption that the effort is quixotic. It takes time to mount an insurgency, time to build support and demonstrate that the challenge can succeed. If 30 primaries are crammed into 13 weeks instead of the present 21, the advantage of incumbency obviously is enhanced.

I should say right about here that I have been involved in this rule-writing process from the start. I was research director of the original reform commission that was appointed after the 1968 Chicago convention, then a member of the commissions that drafted rules for 1976 and now 1980. (My involvement is not universally appreciated by colleagues at the press table, I might add, who are not entirely prepared to concede the difference between reporting for a daily newspaper like *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* and opining for a journal like *The New Republic*.) I also will concede that a good proportion of the time I voted in the minority on these changes adopted by the Carter majority on the Winograd commission, because I believe that rules should be as simple, fair and neutral as they can be, and especially that they should not be jiggered to help an incumbent President who already has about as many inherent advantages as any politician in the free world. In short, I found it easier to agree with Jimmy Carter the candidate who strongly endorsed the 1976 rules as fair and equitable than I do with President Carter as he now attempts to amend those rules to build in a little protection for 1980.

Now let's look at some of the more significant changes and how they were rationalized by the White House and its supporters. The main victim was a 1976 rule that required that state delegations be an accurate representation of voter sentiment. Any presidential candidate who got at least 15 percent of a state's votes in a primary or caucus was automatically entitled to a proportionate share of that state's national convention delegation. Under the new rules that threshold will rise during the shortened primary season from 15 percent in the first month to 20 percent in the second month and 25 percent in the third month, creating what has come to be called a "sliding window system." This sort of thing is necessary, the White House says, to incorporate "consensus building mechanisms" into the nominating process. If winner-take-all systems are abolished, they argue, it is possible that no one would arrive at the convention with a majority of delegates and the result could be a brokered convention. Conveyed to the public by modern media, that would

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look too much like the old-style politics. In addition to the variable threshold, the Winograd Commission also voted that regardless of the ban on winner-take-all systems, single-member districts would be permitted for delegate contests. Now single member districts are by definition winner-take-all, so what the commission has done in this instance is carve-out a loophole in the national convention mandate that provides for fair representation.

The new rules also expand each state's delegation by 10 percent, with all those votes reserved for party and public officials who won't get to conventions as often as they would like if they have to run for delegate spots like everyone else. They're needed, the commission majority argued, to supply continuity, leadership, experience. It also happens to be an enduring fact of American party politics that the party hierarchy supports an incumbent President. The Democrats proved that with the Johnson-Humphrey team in 1968, the Republicans with Ford in 1976. So this should assure Carter a little ten-percent margin in 1980.

There is not much support for these changes among grassroots party workers. Those who showed up to testify at state party hearings held around the country were ten-to-one opposed to raising the thresholds; five-to-one against giving automatic votes to governors, senators and congressmen; and about equally divided on shortening the primary season to 13 weeks. That lack of support is important as the DNC considers the Winograd rules, and it's also important that the rationalizations advanced on behalf of these changes amount to so much sophistry.

By legalizing single-member districts and raising the thresholds needed to qualify for delegates, Carter's backers have prolonged a debate that has divided the Democratic party since 1968. The three-tiered system sounds benign until you set it alongside a calendar and discover that the system is badly skewed—14 percent of the total delegates will be chosen in early primaries with a 15-percent threshold requirement, but nearly 60 percent in primaries with the much higher 25-percent threshold. Unquestionably this mechanism will handicap longshots like Carter was when he began. It could also work a serious disadvantage on protest or issue-based candidates. For example, if Vernon Jordan is still convinced in 1979 that this administration's jobs and urban programs are inadequate and he decides to carry that case to the primaries, these rules could snuff out his candidacy very quickly.

The rules probably won't ever accomplish their intended effect for 1980. If Mr. Carter is challenged—as his backers now believe he will be—it won't be by a crowded field of insurgents. More likely there will be one or perhaps two candidates who are serious in their purpose and fully aware of what's involved in taking on an incumbent President. They will not be deterred by a few new impediments in the rules. If Jimmy Carter looks vulnerable in 1980, you could build a Maginot Line across the Rockies and it wouldn't stop Jerry Brown.

Nor will the rules designed to shorten the delegate selection process have their desired effect, at least in 1980. The Democratic party has no direct power to enforce its will in this matter on the state governments. New Hampshire is so committed to preserving its right to hold the nation's first primary that its primary statute now calls for an automatic adjustment of the date if any other state tries to move in ahead of it. It's been said, and rightly, that New Hampshirites would hold their primary at halftime of the Super Bowl if that's what it takes to be first. Because New Hampshire happens to be that rare place where the GOP controls state politics, and because Republicans are not likely to accomodate Democratic rules changes, New Hampshire can get away with not changing the date for 1980. Next door in Massachusetts, the primary also falls outside the "window" and there is no particular interest in adjusting it. Because the Democrats are in power there, however, the party has leverage to enforce its will. Iowa is not part of the contest to be first out of the blocks in presidential years. For generations, it has held annual precinct caucuses in January. Former state chairman Tom Whitney, a member of the Winograd commission, says his state will simply ignore the national rule.

Even if every state complied with the new window system, it would not shorten American presidential campaigns. Contests for the presidency begin when the candidates start running and the press begins to take notice. Jimmy Carter proved that the best way for a longshot to overcome obscurity is to start very early and court the media assiduously. He kicked off the 1976 campaign with regular visits to Iowa and New Hampshire in January of 1975, and his success is liable to be more impressive to future aspirants than any efforts the party makes to alleviate public boredom by shortening the official calendar.

Finally, the idea that an early consensus is necessary to avoid the image of a brokered convention is a sleight of hand that counts on us all having short memories. Even though it's been quite a while since a national convention of either party even went beyond the first ballot, Jimmy Carter's own nomination was nevertheless a product of old fashioned brokering and it didn't seem to do him much harm. Carter, you will remember, came out of the primaries with something over a thousand delegates, about two-thirds of what he needed for nomination. What put him quickly over the top were the delegates and votes of three masterful brokers—Henry Jackson, George Wallace and the late Richard J. Daley.

Of course, I hope that some of the Winograd rule revisions will be re-revised when the DNC gets a look at them in April. This is in part because I think the 1976 rules were fair, and with minor modification could

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serve the party well for the foreseeable future. Also, the second year of Jimmy Carter's presidency is likely to be important enough to indelibly stamp his administration as a success or a failure. I doubt the wisdom of beginning that year by precipitating a conflict within the Democratic party on issues unrelated to public policy. Right now, President Carter needs all the support he can get, both in the Congress and among Democrats around the country. Jimmy Carter still has no base in his own party, and this is not a promising way to begin building one.

Finally, in a democracy it's always bad politics to try to stay in power by fixing the system. If you ever begin to lose under rules you've rigged yourself, you find you've merely greased your own skids. It's reminiscent of Mr. Dooley's advice to his friend Hennessey. "When ye build yer triumphal arch to yer conquerin' hero, Hennessey," said Dooley, "build it out of bricks so the people will have somethin' convenient to throw at him as he passes through."

Ken Bode

And why?

"Où est Carlucci?"

by Suetonius

The story is still savored in the usually melancholy folklore of the Foreign Service. Congolese Premier Cyril Adoula is about to sit down to a White House luncheon in 1962. Looking around the state dining room and finding only John Kennedy, Dean Rusk, Robert McNamara and other notables, Adoula is distressed at the absence of the equally important American official who had befriended him in the old days in Leopoldville. "Où est Carlucci?" the Premier asks plaintively. "Who the hell is Carlucci?" Kennedy whispers in turn to Rusk, and aides are dispatched on a frantic search. In a cheap Foggy Bottom cafe they find Frank Charles Carlucci III, grandson of an immigrant Italian stonecutter, 32-year-old Foreign Service Officer Class 5, and buddy of Cyril Adoula. He is spirited off to the White House just in time to have dessert with the Premier, and save the administration from the fate of a diplomatic incident.

For a generation of bureaucrats, that anecdote has been a relished vindication against the pretense and naivete of elected political leadership—and so, too, has Frank Carlucci's career. Rescued from a stalled ascent in the Foreign Service, thrust suddenly through a succession of high level positions in domestic affairs, eventually returned to diplomacy as a key ambassador, he was named in December to be Stansfield Turner's principal deputy at the Central Intelligence Agency. Like the Adoula story, it all seems the civil servant's fantasy come true, a tale of buried brilliance discovered and suitably rewarded. But Carlucci's remarkable rise has owed more to mundane Washington politics than to brilliance. His appointment to the Central Intelligence Agency is another example of how the Carter administration has chosen to govern.

Carlucci belonged to that wave of middle-class Foreign Service recruits that swelled the corps with ambition, idealism and excess personnel in the 1950s. The stonecutter's son had become an insurance broker, and Frank III grew up comfortably. After Princeton, Harvard Business School, two years in the Navy, and an unpromising start with Jantzen Swimwear, he joined the State Department in 1956. There followed some routine clerical assignments in Washington, a commercial posting in Johannesburg, and then, in 1960, a junior political reporting job in Leopoldville during the Congo's bloody passage to independence (and American patronage). It was a brief moment of diplomatic swagger and exploit in US African policy, charged with the myths of cold war rivalry and before the military dictators and CIA subsidies settled in. In the Congo, Carlucci distinguished himself not only by the contact with Adoula, a future premier, but also by acts of bravery, in rescuing a car full of Americans from a Congolese mob after a traffic accident, and of diplomatic skill, in negotiating the release by Patrice Lumumba (another friend) of several Belgian hostages. He won a department superior service award, a place at the Congo desk in Foggy Bottom and later one of the Foreign Service's few outside-Washington plums for an officer of his grade, the lone Consul-Generalship on the island of Zanzibar.

After nine years in government, Carlucci had been

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promoted at steady and routine two-year intervals. In the summer of 1965 he was sent to Rio de Janeiro, where he spent the next four years in a series of embassy administrative jobs and won another bureaucratic award for his management of housekeeping chores spurned by most of his fellow officers. But in Rio, the African zeal and adventure already filed away, his career began noticeably—and, again, routinely—to slow and dull. Held at Class Three, the foreign service's make-or-break threshold to either senior rank or early retirement, Carlucci at 39, like so many other FSOs, began to melt indistinguishably into the bureaucracy. No intellectual gifts, no rare expertise singled him out among hundreds of equally talented officers. Not even his past bravery and citations guaranteed promotion to the top: during the Vietnam period department awards were handed out, as one winner recalled, "like Iron Crosses in 1918."

So early in 1969, Frank Carlucci was in Brazil, one more obscure, middle-level embassy official apparently without much of a future. Yet in the next six years, he received four presidential appointments, sat occasionally with the cabinet and become ambassador to Portugal with enough political weight to challenge the most powerful Secretary of State in recent memory. What his foreign service record obscured was that, more important than knowing Adoula or rescuing Americans in Africa or being efficient in Rio, Carlucci had also wrestled with Don Rumsfeld at Princeton.

When Rumsfeld gave up a congressional seat to become Richard Nixon's director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, he promptly brought Carlucci home from Rio in July 1969 to be his assistant director for operations. Carrying responsibility for the then-still-massive community action program, the job catapulted Carlucci not only far upward in the bureaucratic pecking order, but also into the midst of complex domestic issues for which he had no apparent grasp or concern. The reason for the appointment, however, was rudimentary. OEO was a stepchild agency which the Nixon White House viewed (like the State Department) as a disloyal Democratic preserve and relic. Rumsfeld, intending to dismantle the poverty program and expecting sniping on all sides, reached in time-honored Washington tradition for a personal friend with no obvious political liabilities and some bureaucratic experience at taking orders. For his part, of course, Carlucci did not question the logic of his deliverance. "I've never had a strong preference for location," he told the *New York Times*. "I've always been more interested in the nature of the job."

In the event, the "nature" of this particular job was to go along dutifully with the Nixon squeeze on OEO, and thus to get along handsomely in a regime that appreciated but rarely found such professional loyalty. Little more than a year later, with Rumsfeld himself promoted to White House Counselor, Carlucci was made director of the poverty program. Over the next six months he continued the Nixon-Rumsfeld policies without major change; cultivated an affable, non-partisan image with the Congress; and dodged the only covert political controversy by sponsoring a temporary compromise between Governor Ronald Reagan and California's Rural Legal Assistance program, which Reagan wished to destroy. Carlucci presided over the steady attrition of the antipoverty effort, policies which threatened legal services and other valuable reforms nationwide, and which cut OEO's budget by more than half during Nixon's first term.

Presumably on the basis of that performance, Carlucci was elevated again in July 1971, this time to the White House itself to be number three man under George Shultz in the Office of Management and Budget. Again there were no obvious credentials to explain the change, though Carlucci had won what the press called (without undue elaboration) "high marks" for his management at OEO. Don Rumsfeld was still sitting down the corridor from the President. Discreetly supporting the fiscal policies that plunged the country deeper into recession, Carlucci stayed on at OMB through most of the Watergate collapse. Late in 1973, with White House backing, he became Caspar Weinberger's undersecretary at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. A December 1973 speech before the Georgia chapter of the American Society of Public Administration provides a good example of Carlucci's contribution at HEW to the function of American social policy. The speech is a vintage example of bureaucratic prose celebrating as it does the "synergistic impact" and "program considerations" of better administration. Only Nixon's "New Federalism," the undersecretary assured his audience, would keep more people from "falling down the dependency ladder."

In November 1974, early in the Ford regime—in which Rumsfeld was White House Chief of Staff and eventually Secretary of Defense—Carlucci was named ambassador to Portugal. His qualifications for the job—past diplomatic experience and a knowledge of Portuguese—were plainer than for any of his recent appointments. Still, bureaucratic politics seemed once again decisive in Carlucci's rotation through high office. For a new administration nervously watching the fresh, volatile and leftward-swinging democracy in Portugal, he would be a certifiably safe, conservative envoy. Perhaps more important, he would also be Rumsfeld's protege, one of the few direct Ford links in an ambassadorial corps bureaucratically owned or cowed by Henry Kissinger.

Carlucci performed predictably as ambassador. To questions at his confirmation hearing, he stoutly denied any CIA meddling in Lisbon. (When pressed by one senator on the elliptical language of his answers, he even showed a rare flash of public irritation: "It means that I know that there isn't," he replied curtly.) Carlucci

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may have been discreetly ignorant as an unbriefed appointee (not uncommon) or consciously dissimulating. But whatever the reason, his answers were inaccurate. At the time Carlucci testified, the CIA, with Kissinger's approval, was lavishly devoting both money and agents to shore up the most conservative elements in Portugal. Later, in 1975, when Kissinger moved toward a virtual aid embargo against the independent and still non-Communist Lisbon regime, Carlucci opposed the cut-off in what several sources remember as a "blistering" cable exchange. To the usual ambassadorial fervor for one's clients he added the old alliance with Rumsfeld, and thus won the battle with rare immunity from Kissinger's retaliation. At the same time, however, he also reportedly conditioned US humanitarian aid to Portugal's collapsing African colonies on the ouster of the most vocally anti-American officials in Lisbon.

Now, having been kept on in Lisbon by the Carter administration, he returns to Washington to be deputy director of the CIA. Ironically, he is once more the White House's choice. And again he appears as the loyal, blurred bureaucrat needed to ride out controversy. Admiral Turner refused to pick a deputy from the Agency's hostile old-boy network, while the old boys themselves are still smarting from the forced retirement of 200 superannuated agents last autumn. So Carlucci is the administration's happy compromise. As at OEO, OMB, HEW and the Lisbon Embassy, not to mention all those Foreign Service postings long ago, he will be expected, with some confidence, to follow orders and "manage" things quietly. Beyond that, of course, his qualifications for the job are, as usual, rather vague.

In the Congo he quietly watched the widening CIA intervention that led indirectly to the murder of his friend Lumumba and even to the later overthrow of Adoula. He arrived in Rio only months after the CIA engineered the military coup against the elected Goulart regime, and watched quietly as the Agency administered covert subsidies and technical aid to keep the torture-prone Brazilian junta in power. At his own Lisbon Embassy he sat quietly as the local CIA station struggled to keep the new Portuguese democracy within proper bounds. Now he will be the only official short of Turner himself who will have the writ and means to monitor the full range of CIA operations. Under the reorganization plan just announced, the Agency will exercise unprecedented central control over the planning and execution of American espionage. That organizational grip probably will make Carlucci the single most powerful deputy in the government, and surely the most powerful in the history of the CIA.

In the lavish sunny office of the deputy director, he will be another classic bureaucrat somehow expected to command and temper the bureaucracy. To ride one of the rogue elephants of Washington institutions he comes from an apprenticeship as a pliant passenger in a Nixon administration run amok. The bravery and brashness of the young Foreign Service officer seem to have deserted Carlucci some time ago, worn away by the mores and unbroken success of his promotion. The man who saved Americans from a mob and freed Belgian hostages could not bring himself to try (and it would have taken equal courage, there is no doubt) to rescue poverty programs from a mob mentality in the White House, or to release the health and educational advances held hostage by Nixon-Ford policy. If there is any ideology apparent in his record since 1969, it is certainly not that of his present employer. More apparent than any ideology, though, is the old bureaucratic pragmatism, the career greased by a willing suspension of belief. Carlucci is known for a clipped informality that often passes for self-assertion and strength in the otherwise oily culture of bureaucracy. By several accounts of those who have worked with him, critics as well as admirers, he is personally an easy, unpretentious man devoted to his work—not at all unlike hundreds of his kind in the huge, faceless civil service from which he emerged eight years ago. And when the man is measured against his offices, particularly the CIA, what stands out is not evil or danger or gross incompetence, but simply the utterly pedestrian quality of it all.

Carlucci will not be alone at the upper reaches. On the National Security Council staff, at the State Department, in a dozen important embassies, under Andrew Young at the UN—in nearly every precinct of foreign policy, there remain men who similarly owe their rank, their present authority, in large part to the dubious people and practices Jimmy Carter was elected to replace. This feckless resort to bureaucratic government—the loss of independence and commitment beyond self, the further atrophy of merit and idealism—is expensive. The politics that now return Frank Carlucci to Washington, like those that hoisted him out of oblivion during the Nixon years, are still the politics of a closed system.

Last spring, when senior State Department bureaucrats put forward Carlucci's name for the job as Deputy Undersecretary of State for administration, rumblings of opposition from Congressman John Brademas and Senator Paul Sarbanes—opposition reportedly on the basis of Carlucci's Nixon record—

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stopped the move. With his CIA confirmation hearings upon us, there is apparently no serious questioning of Carlucci's new appointment.

"Où est Carlucci?" Why, he's gone to be Deputy Director of the CIA, Cyril. It's a long story from when you knew him. But then, come to think about it, it's not all that different from how you and your boys ran things in the Congo.

Prophecy is more important for what it tells us about the present than for what it tells us about the future.

The Future Hustle

by James Henry

Economic forecasting is one of the hottest fields in the US economy, along with law, medicine, evangelical religion, astrology and pornography. In some ways it resembles these other industries. It has the pretension to technical rigor of legal analysis, the therapeutic swank of medicine, the irrational claims to authority of evangelical religion and astrology and, alas, pornography's insatiable audience of subscribers. Like these other services, economic forecasting thrives on human weakness, and acquires a stake in the vices it proposes to cure. In a stable, growing economy with full employment and steady prices, there is not much need for the economic forecaster's arts. Uncertainty is what puts bread on his table, and the increase in economic uncertainty over the past decade explains much of the rising demand for economic forecasting. But this uncertainty is itself partly the result of bad policies based on poor economic forecasts. In the past few years economic forecasting has joined law and medicine and similar mysterious arts to form a corner of the modern economy where Say's Law actually works: supply creates its own demand, and the forecasters grow richer as their forecasts do worse.

The leader of the economic forecasting industry is a company called Data Resources, Inc. DRI was founded in 1968 by Otto Eckstein, a Harvard professor and former member of the Council of Economic Advisors under Lyndon Johnson. Eckstein is a fairly orthodox Keynesian and until age 40 he was a fairly typical academic economist. Now he is rich. DRI's revenues have grown more than 30 percent each year for the past 10 years, even during the severe 1974-75 bust. Sales reached two million dollars in 1977. Profits have grown even faster. The company went public in November 1976; Professor Eckstein owns about 10 percent of it now. DRI's clients include two-thirds of the nation's 100 largest manufacturing firms, 32 of the top 50 banks, nine of the top 25 insurance companies, two dozen federal agencies, several state agencies and a growing number of foreign buyers. DRI has two principal competitors in the economic forecasting field: Chase Econometrics, a spin-off of the Chase Manhattan Bank, and a "non-profit" organization affiliated with the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania. They have enjoyed similar, if not quite equivalent, success.

What are these businesses and government agencies getting for their money? Eckstein and his competitors are selling exactly what prophets, seers, diviners, oracles, soothsayers, haruspices and geomancers have sold throughout the ages: a vision of the future. To make this product claim convincing requires a gimmick, something to create the necessary air of mystery and to explain why the prophet can see what ordinary mortals cannot. The economic forecasters' gimmick is the computer. Inside the computer is a "model" of the world economy in the form of a series of mathematical equations. The claim is that these equations permit the computer to take information about the present and divine patterns in it that the ordinary eye cannot see. These patterns then are used to predict the future. Each forecaster has his own model, which he naturally claims is the best. Lawrence Klein of Wharton, who has been selling predictions for five years longer than Eckstein, believes that at least 50 equations are necessary for a respectable model. DRI's model has 900 equations, but there is one in Canada that has 1500.

Earlier forecasters had different gimmicks. The ancient Chinese used *I Ching* hexagrams to predict harvests and pestilence. The Hebrew prophets occasionally made economic predictions, but they usually

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worked gratuitously, supported by charitable contributions. Probably the oldest antecedents of our modern private forecasters were the Greek chresmologists of the 6th century BC, itinerant salesmen who consulted the oracles and then sold their insights to kings and mere citizens. Since then there has been a long line of palmisters, necromancers, numerologists and other varieties of diviners-for-profit. Merlin and Nostradamus were the most celebrated practitioners of these arts. The astronomers Tycho Brahe and John Kepler both cast individual horoscopes for rather high fees in the 16th century to supplement their meager incomes as serious scientists; Kepler felt ashamed of this sideline, which he described as "scarcely more respectable than begging."

Prophets enjoy the great advantage that correct predictions tend to be remembered long after incorrect ones have been forgotten. Guicciardini, the Italian historian, remarked in 1529, "How happy are the astrologers, who are believed if they tell one truth to a hundred lies, while other people lose all credit if they tell one lie to a hundred truths." It is remembered, for example, that in 1651 the English astrologer William Lilly correctly forecast both the great plague of 1665 and the great fire of London in 1666. But this was trivial; Nostradamus had predicted both events in a book published in 1577 in Amsterdam, while Tycho Brahe is said to have predicted them in 1563, when only 17 years old. But such accuracy was not always highly rewarded, any more than inaccuracy was always punished. William Lilly was hauled before a Parliamentary inquiry after his prophecies about the plague and the fire had come true. In 1634 the Lady Eleanor Davies was sent to prison for "the assumption of the gift of prophecy," because she had correctly predicted the death of her husband, the Lord Chief Justice of England, in 1626, and—thus encouraged—had set about predicting the deaths of other important people.

Many diviners, however, have been able to live quite comfortably from their practices, especially in times of social crisis. This appears to be a second vital ingredient in the persistence of these arts: private forecasting is parasitic on chaos and insecurity. It is most in demand when, objectively, the future is least predictable. Regular procedures for receiving oracles from Delphi and Dodona emerged in the fifth century BC, just as Greece came under increased military pressures. The most important Hebrew prophets turned up when Israel was most threatened by its enemies. The burgeoning demand for astrologers peeked during the Puritan Revolution of the 1640s, which also saw the worst economic disruption of that century in England. The coincidence of bad times and rampant prophecy supports Condorcet's observation that prophecy is important not so much because of what it tells us about the future, but because of what it tells us about the present. This coincidence also helps to account for the deep ambivalence that the public has always shown toward its prophets, tolerating and even worshipping them up to a point, beyond which it begins to throw stones and set stakes.

The pre-computer economic forecasters did not compile an impressive record. Thomas Malthus, the early 19th century British economist, predicted that population growth would outrun agricultural productivity on a worldwide basis within a century. Irving Fisher, an otherwise distinguished Yale economist, will never escape the ignominy attached to his declaration on October 15, 1929, that "Stock prices have reached a permanently high plateau." During World War II US government economists, strongly influenced by a simplistic version of Keynesian theory, issued a consensus forecast of a serious postwar depression. Today's forecasters have dissociated themselves from these bloopers by the adoption of sophisticated statistical methods and computer technology. The modern forecaster squats over his model like the Delphic Pythia, inhales its spirits, then speaks of the mysteries revealed, frequently in an obscure patois.

This new model-based forecasting procedure was made possible by several changes on the "supply side," including the government's accumulation and publication of vast amounts of macroeconomic data, the improvement of computers and statistics, and the proliferation of professional economists. Most of the pioneering work on modelling was completed in the 1940s and 1950s. By the Kennedy years there were

The New American Hustler

One hundred years ago an eager young American in search of riches would most likely aspire to found a great industrial or retailing empire. If he succeeded, such a person probably would adopt a sensibly conservative political viewpoint—and with good reason, having a lot to conserve. The post-industrial, mixed-economy era seems to have created a new pattern of entrepreneur. There is a modern path to riches, with three common characteristics. First, what is up for sale tends to be more amorphous or ephemeral, and several steps removed from the production of goods and services that add directly to the national prosperity. Second, these operations often depend on the existence of a large government sector, either as a customer or as a generator of the need for their services. And third, the promoters tend to be politically liberal, and have found some way of making money out of it. This is the second in an occasional series of articles examining the rise of these new American hustlers.

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already a half-dozen models with 50 or more equations. But until the middle 1960s all the models were developed and operated by the government, academic institutions, and non-profit foundations. The lucrative private forecasting industry had its origins not in any new technical achievements by its founders, but in their ability to find new markets for old achievements, usually not their own. They passed the word that elaborate models, under the guidance of suitable experts, were now prepared to unveil the future to ordinary businessmen and public officials. Or rather, they hinted and titillated and enticed, with a kind of utopian enthusiasm, never really promising—for that would be unscientific (as well as illegal).

Thus the success of private economic forecasting depends on the government in three vital ways. First, the government supplies for free all the raw data about the economy that get fed into the models. Second, since government actions can affect the modern economy in so many different ways, uncertainty about government intentions and their potential effect creates much of the demand for economic forecasts. Finally, the government itself is one of the forecasters' best clients, with the endearing habit of paying many times over (through different agencies) for access to the same model, which is spewing back predictions based on information the government itself supplied.

Can computer models really divine the future, or do they represent just another of the superstitions that litter history? The record is very mixed. In the 1960s until 1968, the models were very successful. In 1966, for example, Wharton's model predicted that the Gross National Product in 1967 would be $794 billion, which turned out to be precisely correct. But the growth of the US economy in the 1960s was remarkably stable, so it was deceptively easy for models to perform well. From early 1961 to late 1969 the economy went through 106 months of prosperity, the longest such period ever recorded in US history. So it is not very surprising the models built in the 1960s all performed rather well in the 1960s, even though theories about how the economy works were very different from one another. It is usually not difficult to forecast the *continuation* of a trend, even without any reference at all to economic theory. For instance, a fine way to predict next year's GNP—between turning points, that is—is simply to continue the pattern reflected in the GNP for previous years, even though this method is almost entirely devoid of any *explanatory* value.

Of course if a prediction works, who cares why it works? Starting in the sixth century BC the Babylonians became very adept at calculating the timing of astronomical events such as lunar eclipses and the appearance of the new moon. They achieved this merely by accumulating a long time series of observations and then deciphering the regularities, without—to our knowledge—ever thinking about why these regularities existed (other than the caprices of the Sky-God). The Greeks of the same period, in contrast, could scarcely predict a sunrise, and yet were filled with fruitful speculations about the structure of the universe.

Our modern economic forecasters would have us believe that they have successfully merged the Babylonian and Greek methodologies. They credited their predictive successes of the 1960s to theoretical sophistication. They did not advertise that simple, theory-free models were just as accurate in those economically stable times. Professor Klein of Wharton wrote in 1971 that further improvements in prediction would come about only with the adoption of even "larger, more realistic, and more complicated" models. But as the 1960s drew to a close, predictions by the large models began to err. It turns out they don't do much better in times of instability than "naive," theory-free, very simple projections.

And the 1970s have been very unstable. Already there have been two worldwide recessions in less than a decade, including the highest and most persistent unemployment and inflation since Pearl Harbor, a decline in real stock prices nearly as large as the one that occurred in 1929-31 and about three times as much fluctuation in real GNP growth as in the 1960s. This instability is widely attributed to an extraordinary combination of shocks delivered to the system by the Vietnam War, the oil cartel, grain shortages and the rich afterlife of Dr. Arthur Burns. Unquestionably so, but history is an inevitable series of accidents. A prophet who cannot deal with the accidents of history is not much use.

The econometric models of the 1970s, however sophisticated, are just not theoretically equipped to deal with the discontinuities in expectations and lags introduced by a weird combination of excess demand in some markets and excess supply in others. The relative stability of the 1960s was a poor practice field.

By now there have been several technical evaluations of model performance in the 1970s published in academic journals and circulated in university communities. These papers offer rich material for criticism, weakened by a somewhat narrow perspective and a reluctance to declare out loud that the Emperor is without clothes. Here is what they show.

To begin with, the accuracy of forecasts depends more on when they are made than how. In the 1970s all the major models had serious troubles. Median forecasting errors for variables like GNP, unemployment, and inflation were nearly three times as high on average between 1970 and 1977 as they were in the mid-1960s. Even after the 1973 oil embargo became known to Chase, DRI, Wharton and the Commerce Department, their median year-ahead forecast of inflation for 1974 was off by nearly 50 percent. They all also completely missed the absolute decline in real GNP that occurred in the first quarter of 1975, which may

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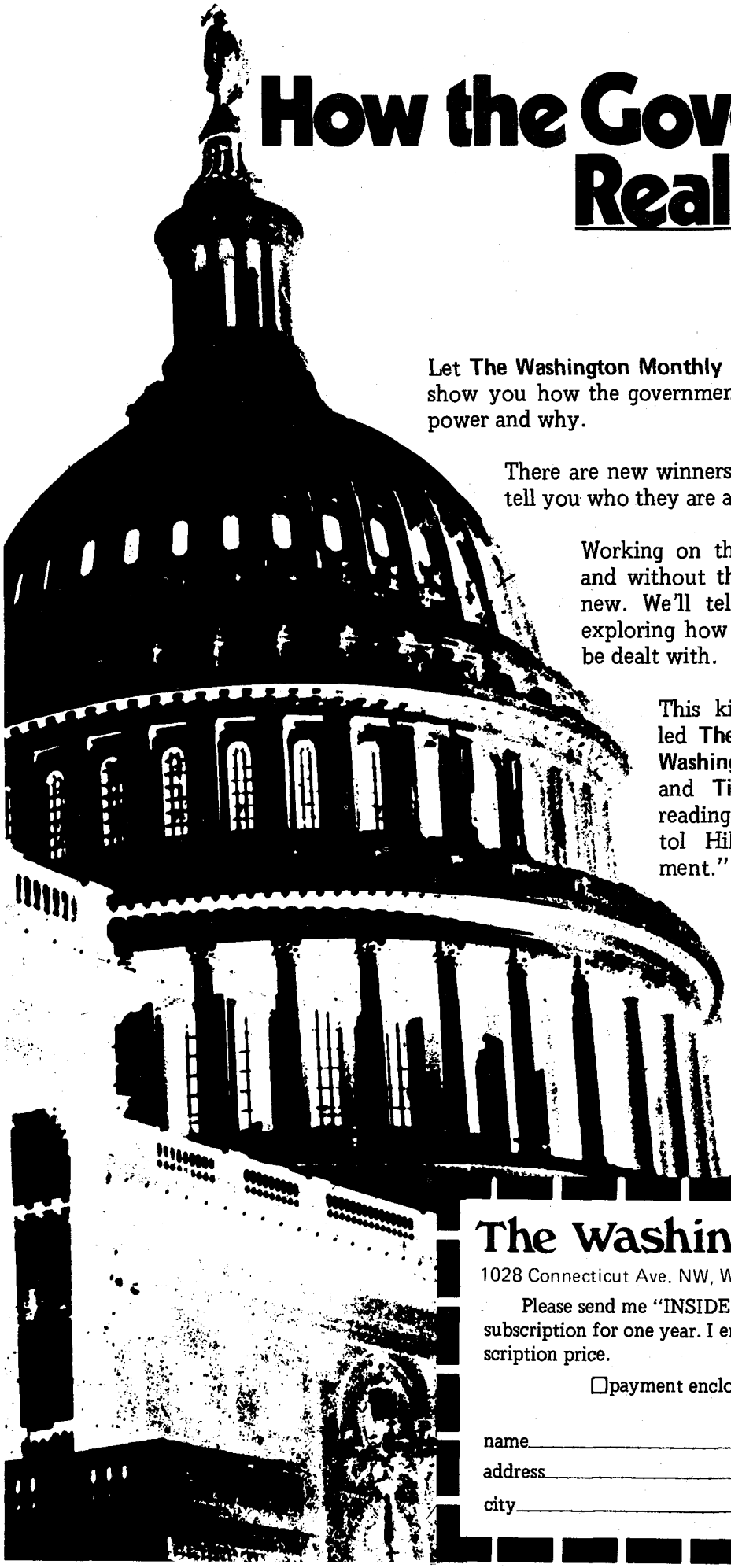

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have contributed to the Ford administration's slowness to recognize that a serious recession was in the offing. None of the major models did much better than any of the others. During periods of economic recovery, forecasting errors declined sharply. But as we said, there is no trick to prediction during such periods.

In fact, the computer models have done no better in the 1970s than have economists simply playing their own hunches. Since 1968 the American Statistical Association and the National Bureau of Economic Research have conducted quarterly surveys of 60 to 80 economists, who give their predictions for a dozen economic variables over the next six quarters. From 1970 to 1977, the error levels for the ASA-NBER panel forecasts were virtually indistinguishable from those of Chase, DRI, or Wharton, for each variable and for every forecast period. For the prediction of unemployment changes, inflation and real GNP, the uncomputerized economists did somewhat better than DRI's computer model. It is true that some of these economists were heavily influenced in their own predictions by published figures from econometric models. In May 1977, for example, 13 of 41 members of the panel said that an econometric model was the "most important" source of their forecasts. But the others—a majority—relied mainly on informal theories of their own. One New York forecaster is said to base his predictions on changes in the price of the chemical carborundum. And in fact a 1975 study reported that those panel members who had used informal models had consistently better forecasts of both inflation and unemployment than those panel members who had depended on the econometric models. Of course "judgmental" forecasters are often wrong, too. The point is merely that very different forecasting methods often yield very similar results.

The computer model builders have replied to criticism by saying that their magic cannot be expected to work in the hands of others (an old favorite among high priests, geomancers, etc.). Klein of Wharton has written, "The outsiders . . . have done violence to the models . . . Large scale models are such complicated and delicate mechanisms that they require very careful handling by people who fully understand them."

The model-builders also point out that only with a enormous model can you analyze "contingencies," complex changes in economic policy. For example, a forecast of aggregate GNP will not be of much help to a steel firm interested in inventory control; it wants to know how aggregate demand will be distributed across the economy and what effect it will have on steel requirements, competitors' prices, and so on. Or a policy change which includes new investment tax credits, personal income tax surcharges, a public employment program and new government loans for mortgages may be very difficult to trace through without the use of simulations on a large model. But the steel industry must have been forecasting its own inventory requirements before the big computer models came along. How much predictive accuracy has it gained by placing itself in a large model of the entire economy? Unfortunately there is almost no evidence on this question as yet. But we may well wonder how these large models can do so poorly on the national aggregates, and yet get the particulars right.

As for national policy analysis, no one can deny that it is difficult and uncertain in the absence of a large model. The trouble is that it is also difficult and uncertain in the *presence* of a large model. The different assumptions about the effects of policy options built into various "conditional forecasting" models produce very different results when the computers are asked about, say, the effect of changes in government spending or monetary policy. Of course this is just what anyone familiar with the long debate over monetarism would expect.

The history of divination is a history of technology, from the divining rod and the Delphic tripod to the astrolabe, the crystal ball and the computer. A large econometric model is not really much different in this respect. The claim frequently is made that it replaces the mortal forecaster with an immortal reservoir of scientific wisdom. But in truth there has been no such replacement. It is the models that suffer the high mortality rates, and even while they live they serve as *vox angelici* for their ventriloquial builders.

Nor is this situation likely to change. I should probably refuse out of principle to indulge in any forecasts of my own, but the temptation is obviously an overwhelming human frailty. Let me therefore boldly predict that improvements in forecasting technology already have reached the point of diminishing returns. This prediction assumes that the future is most drastically affected by rare events, political decisions and psychological changes that are supremely difficult to account for. It also assumes the continued weakness of economic theory. Forecasting accuracy will continue to depend almost entirely on what phase the economy is in when the forecast is made. At any particular time, each kind of economic system is probably subject to its own irreducible minimum of uncertainty. We are probably near the limits of our ability to forecast the future of advanced capitalism, and that ability is not very high.

La Semaine Prochaine

Bernard-Henri Levy:
le problème du terrorisme en
Europe Occidentale.

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Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies is at the vanguard of an emerging neoconservative foreign policy consensus.

Home for Hardliners

by Morton Kondracke

Who makes American foreign policy? In the dear, dead days from World War II to Vietnam, when the President knew best, when politics stopped at the water's edge and when Americans understood the lessons of Munich, we all know who made policy: a tight, exclusive elite establishment of Ivy Leaguers, Wall Street lawyers, foundation executives and, later, professors—WASPs and, later, Jews and Catholics—who hashed things out privately at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York and promulgated their consensus in *Foreign Affairs*. Every four or eight years, when administrations changed, a new group left the lucrative life in New York—later, the less lucrative life in Cambridge—for "public service" in the executive branch in Washington, trading places with those who had been there previously. Whether Republican or Democrat, members of this establishment tended to share the same world view—that American interests were under Communist challenge everywhere and had to be resisted everywhere.

In form, the classic Stimson-Acheson-Dulles-McCloy-Bundy-Rusk-Rogers (later, Kissinger) tradition lives on today in Cyrus Vance, the Wall Streeter turned Secretary of State. But other things have changed. The Council on Foreign Relations, *Foreign Affairs*, New York, Cambridge, even the executive branch, have waned as loci of foreign policy-making. Washington is increasingly the place where policy is shaped, as well as executed, partially because Congress has demanded a role in it. In the executive branch, this is the era of the Trilateral Commission—the vehicle of Zbigniew Brzezinski and David Rockefeller for breaking out of the tight New York-Cambridge axis and bringing Europeans, Japanese, Members of Congress and governors of Georgia into the American consensus-making process. Vance, Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal, Defense Secretary Harold Brown, UN Ambassador Andrew Young and other top officials, not to mention the President, are all former associates of the Commission. For additional ideas to fuel and personnel to fill the Carter administration, the Trilateral in-group also looked to Washington-based organizations such as the Brookings Institution, the Carnegie Endowment and its publication, *Foreign Policy*.

The Trilateral administration, at the outset, departed in important ways from the old New York-Cambridge worldview. President Carter disclaimed any "inordinate fear of Communism," decided to withdraw ground troops from Korea, opposed continued white rule in Southern Africa, pooh-poohed Communist inroads in Western Europe and penetrations in black Africa, moved to improve relations with Cuba, Vietnam and China, agreed to "give up" the Panama Canal and began making other countries' internal human rights policies a determining factor in relations with the United States. Either in conception or execution, these departures have come under concerted attack. The administration has shown repeated signs of reversing itself, or faltering, or both. Something close to a majority of the American people wonders whether the Trilateral bunch has any idea what it is doing.

Of all the sources of criticism of Carter foreign policy, probably the single most consistently trenchant and influential is a Washington think tank associated with Georgetown University, the Center for Strategic and International Studies. It is the place that Henry Kissinger chose as his academic base, instead of Columbia, Pennsylvania or Yale, but Kissinger's decision did not establish the Center's quality or its prestige. Rather, it confirmed the former and enhanced the latter. For 15 years, CSIS has been producing important ideas, analyses and policy alternatives. It was first among the think tanks to spot the energy crisis, the depth of the Sino-Soviet split and the importance of the Persian Gulf to the United States. Over the years, it has developed close ties in Congress and with important scholars and political leaders abroad. One of Kissinger's functions is to draw in top world business leaders. The CSIS's budget has grown fivefold in the last 10 years, and the Center has just established *Washington Review*, a quarterly whose editor wants it to rival *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy* as the nation's foremost journal of global policy debate. If the Trilateral administration should flop, it could be succeeded by one strongly influenced by Georgetown—headed, say, by a mainstream Republican or, perhaps, by a Democrat such as Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

At the Center's offices in downtown Washington,

This is the third in an occasional series of articles about non-government institutions in Washington and their effect on public policy.

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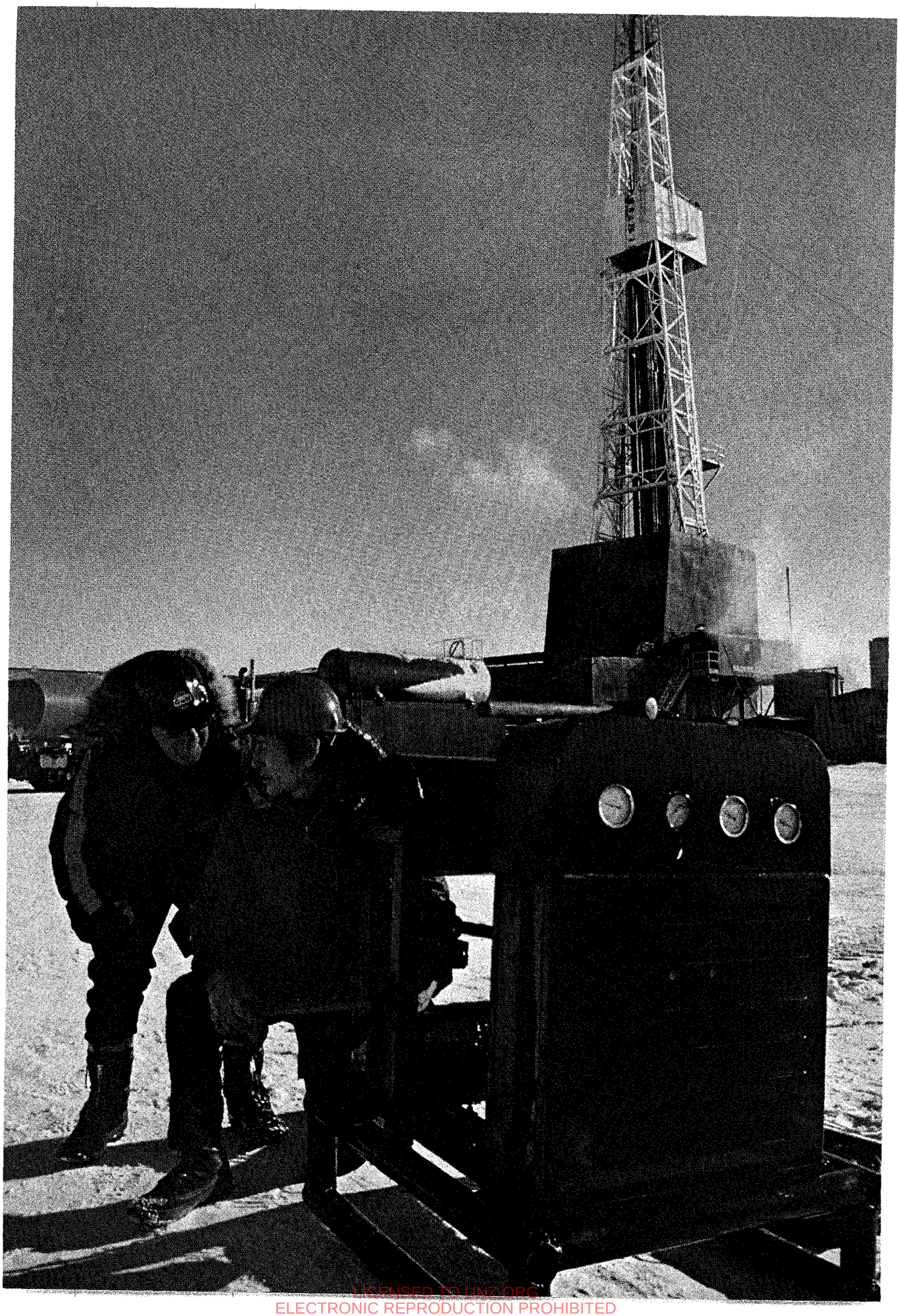

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"It's 52° below zero up here, but, crazy as it sounds, we need this machine to keep the ground frozen."

"When you drill for gas north of the Arctic Circle, the way we're doing here at Canada's Mackenzie Delta, you expect a lot of problems," says Bob Toole, drilling superintendent for Gulf.

"But this one's a real fooler. It's a freezing unit. Even at 52° below zero, we need it to keep the ground around the wellhead frozen.

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"The problem is that when the drilling mud comes up from the bottom of the hole, maybe a mile down, it's hot enough to melt the permafrost that's holding up the whole rig.

"If the permafrost melted, the hole would get bigger and bigger, and the operation would have to come to a halt.

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"Our freezer keeps the top thirty feet of the casing around the drill pipe at temperatures below freezing, so that doesn't happen.

"This country is probably one of the toughest spots on earth to drill for natural gas. But we're drilling the wells. We're meeting the challenge."

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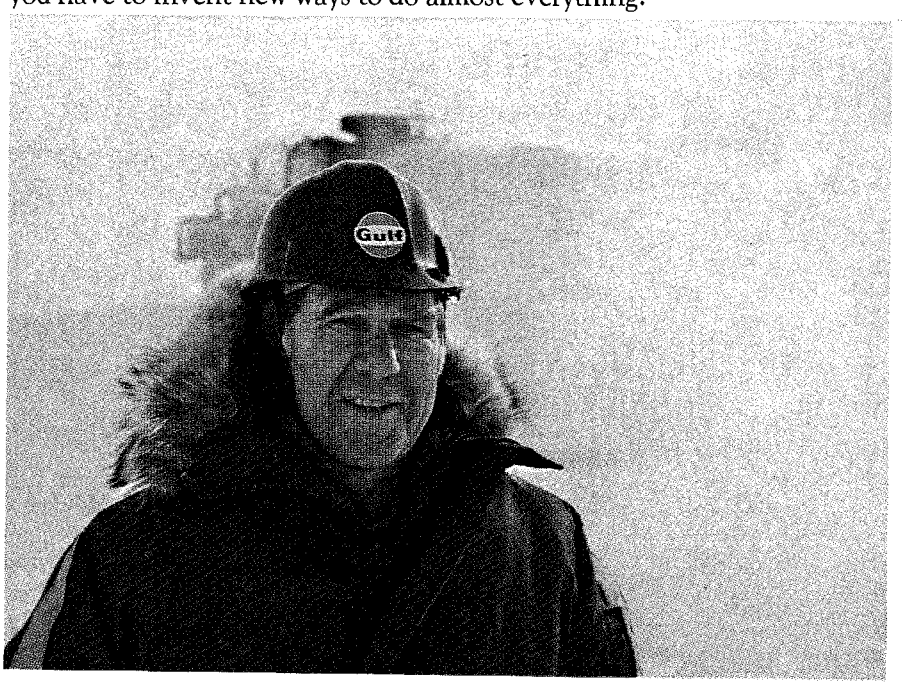
"At temperatures as low as this, you have to invent new ways to do almost everything."



Left to right: Bob Toole, roustabout Jacob Kuhoktak, and the freezer.

Gulf Oil Corporation

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most of its executives and staff members deny that CSIS has any partisan or ideological tilt. They claim it is objective, diverse, realistic and centrist. "We are not a government-in-exile," said the Center's strategic studies director, Ray Cline. "We are an open university for policy-makers, a school for governments." Institutionally and officially, this may be true, but scholars at the Center have individual views which, taken as a whole, come out distinctly—and brilliantly—hard-line. Cline, former deputy director of CIA, started the campaign that eventually stopped the Carter administration's rush to normalize relations with China. Another CSIS PhD, Roger Fontaine, is the leading intellectual critic of Carter's Panama Canal treaties. The executive editor of *Washington Review*, Michael Ledeen, a frequent contributor to *TNR* and *Commentary*, has urged administration opposition to Eurocommunism, as has Kissinger, who has been downplaying his former ardent advocacy of detente with the Soviet Union. Kissinger and other CSIS figures have criticized Carter policies in the Middle East and Soviet inroads in Africa. They have advocated the B-1 bomber and opposed early Carter efforts to deny breeder reactors to the world. CSIS associate Edward Luttwak, another frequent *Commentary* contributor, is a leading critic of United States arms control and strategic weapons policies.

In its influence on American foreign policy, the Center may be centrist, but that is only so because American opinion has shifted. It has shifted, in the opinion of one CSIS scholar, "because of the incompetence of the Carter administration and what the Russians have been doing." CSIS did not influence the country's change of mood, he said, but CSIS has become influential as a result of this change and because "of our intellectual superiority and the collapse of the other side." According to Cline, CSIS *is* "conservative," but not right-wing. "It is conservative in the sense of being dedicated to the preservation of American values. I am concerned lest we move too far away from the experience and wisdom that came from World War II and the following years, and retreat into innocence and a figurative isolationism." There seems little danger of that, however. What seems more to be happening is the formation of a new hardline consensus in the country, and Georgetown is in the intellectual vanguard of it.

The Center is the creation and principal life's work of David M. Abshire, a tall, gentle-spoken West Point graduate and combat veteran who left the Army to get his PhD in international relations at Georgetown in 1959. He is a Republican who worked in his 30s for the House GOP policy committee and for the American Enterprise Institute, the conservative think tank. In 1962, he succeeded in convincing AEI's President, William Baroody Sr., and four foundations to put up money for a new strategic studies center vaguely modeled on the Institute for Strategic Studies in London. Simultaneously, he got Georgetown University to sponsor it and retired Admiral Arleigh Burke to be its chairman. The Burke-AEI connections have given CSIS a right-wing reputation ever since its founding, but Abshire maintains it has been consistently dedicated to considering diverse points of view. In contrast to other think tanks started in the 1960s, liberal or conservative, Georgetown was founded under rules that it would accept no CIA or Defense Department funding and would do no classified research. Abshire contends the best way to influence highest-level policymakers and the public—as opposed to bureaucrats—is by publishing in the open.

Until recently, the Center accepted no government funding whatever, but lately it has accepted small grants from the Environmental Protection Agency and the arms control agency. It has no endowment, and therefore has to raise its budget as it goes along, by proposing studies that seem relevant to foundations and corporations. The Center's original budget was $120,000 a year. It was $500,000 in 1969 and currently is $2.4 million. Two thirds of this money comes from foundations—including Ford, Rockefeller, Mellon, Crown, Lilly and Sarah Scaife—and one third from corporations. Atlantic-Richfield, headed by Renaissance oilman Robert O. Anderson, was the biggest corporate donor last year.

In the 1960s, and even today, "strategic studies" had and has a distinctly military connotation, whereas the Center always has been more dedicated to studying global grand strategy—international maneuver based on military and economic power, geography, alliances and political decisions. In 1966, Abshire convinced the late Philip Mosely, probably the country's most distinguished Russia scholar, to organize an international network of front-rank academics to advise the Center about what problems it ought to be studying. That is regarded as a key moment in the Center's history, and it was marked by a name change to make it clear the Center did "international" as well as "strategic" studies. Mosely's International Research Council, which assembles annually at a travel cost of $25,000, now is headed by Professor Walter Laqueur, a brilliant and witty Middle East expert, onetime Kissinger critic and, lately, author of books on guerrilla warfare and terrorism. Laqueur also edits the Center's "Washington Papers" series, which turns out 10 short paperback books per year by experts on various international topics. The books frequently become standard handy reference on the state of affairs in, say, India, Saudi Arabia, international broadcasting or nuclear strategy.

To Abshire and others at the Center, CSIS's purpose is "to stay ahead of the game" in foreign policy—to anticipate issues that will be of vital concern to policymakers and produce research on them. There is a definite sense of competition among think tanks to be ahead of one another in defining the issues of the

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future. Abshire says that CSIS was first—in a 1966 study headed by former Defense Secretary Neil McElroy—to predict that the Johnson administration's methods of financing the Vietnam war would lead to disastrous inflation, which it did. He implies that other CSIS assessments were critical of military and political decision-making during the war. But this did not prevent Abshire himself from joining the Nixon administration as assistant secretary of state for congressional relations and from serving as a principal defender of administration war policy and war powers under assaults from Capitol Hill.

Abshire emerged from administration service in 1973 with his honorable reputation intact and seemingly without having made mortal enemies anywhere in Washington. He says he also emerged convinced that Congress was bent on decisive involvement in foreign policy. He set the Center to work both studying the phenomenon and getting in tune with it. Now, CSIS's professional thinkers hold regular briefings for members of Congress and staff groups. A Center advisory board contains a number of members of Congress, including Senator Hubert Humphrey before his death, and the chairmen of the House International Relations Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee and the Joint Economic Committee. Unlike the Trilateral Commission, CSIS seems not to have made any effort to collect future presidential hopefuls onto the board. If a Georgetown Center administration ever comes to power, it will be by CSIS's ability to anticipate issues, and not by an arbitrary gamble on politicians' fortunes.

CSIS's most successful anticipation of a coming hot issue was about energy. In the spring of 1973, Abshire hired Jack Bridges, a staff member of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee. Bridges briefed no less than 80 senators and half the members of the House that an energy crisis was at hand—all before the Yom Kippur war broke out that October. The Center produced a movie in an effort to convince the public, as well. Energy continues to be CSIS's largest area of interest, including a $700,000 project that has brought industry and environmental groups together in an unprecedented effort to develop an agreed national coal policy. The project is intended to prevent coal exploitation from falling victim to the same crippling political and environmental controversies that have plagued development of nuclear power.

A kind of entrepreneurship develops in think-tankery—the more foresight an institution shows on policy issues, the more interest and money it can attract, the better to hire brains and improve its foresight. CSIS has pioneered inquiry on issues such as weapons standardization in NATO, human rights (in 1973) and reorganization of USIA; and it has gained the wherewithal to sponsor several major international meetings a year including a Quadrangular Conference (going the Trilateralists one better) that brings together government leaders, scholars and legislators from Europe, Japan, the United States, Canada and also the third world, to discuss economics and other issues.

Credit for the Center's development, say his subordinates, goes entirely to Abshire. "He's a deceptive Southerner," said one of them. "He does not come on like an intellectual. He is not, in fact, an original philosopher, but he knows what's good and who's good. He knows all the best brains in the world." Another colleague said, "He has perfect political instinct. You bring him an idea and he'll instantly understand all the political implications of it. If it's a project for the Center, he'll automatically know who will be interested in it and who might fund it."

It was Abshire, at the urging of Peter F. Krogh, dean of Georgetown's foreign service school, who talked to Kissinger about joining the Center. Conversations began six months before Kissinger left the government, at a time when it appeared Kissinger was thinking about locating in New York. Kissinger decided he also wanted a Washington base, to be close to current foreign policy-making. Student and faculty discord at Columbia dissuaded him from accepting an offer there, and accepting attractive offers from Yale or Pennsylvania, he decided, would have forced him to travel between three different cities to get his work done. He is also said to have been surprised at the Georgetown Center's range of activities and personnel.

Kissinger's new colleagues include some strong onetime critics, including Cline and Luttwak—the latter, a former protege of James Schlesinger, who was a Center associate before he became Carter's energy chief. The staff also includes William Hyland, a former National Security Council aide who is helping Kissinger with his memoirs and helping Cline with Soviet studies; former Pentagon official Amos A. Jordon Jr., who is in charge of natural resource studies, former State Department cultural chief John Richardson Jr., head of studies of international communications and human rights, and Michael Samuels, former ambassador to Sierra Leone, now in charge of third-world studies. Kissinger is attached to a major new project on the future of business, originally launched with a $250,000 grant from Mobil.

Georgetown pays Kissinger $35,000 to be a CSIS counselor and to teach seminars to students. He also gets an unmarked, well-guarded suite of offices in the CSIS complex and help in paying for his staff. Kissinger also has an office in New York from which he conducts his commercial enterprises, including lucrative consultantships to NBC, the Chase Manhattan Bank and Goldman Sachs, the investment house. Kissinger thus shuttles back and forth between the old center of foreign policy making in America and the new one. With a fine sense of where power is shifting, it is not surprising that Henry Kissinger settled in the Georgetown Center.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Great Directors, Gray News

The Serpent's Egg (Paramount). Last year I had dinner with a Hollywood director just before his latest film opened, and he mentioned that it had cost $8 million. I said that this was a coincidence of a kind: that very day I had read that Ingmar Bergman's new film, made in Munich, had cost $8 million. "Well," said the Hollywood man somewhat grimly, "now he's a member of the club."

My companion's grimness turns out to be justified. Bergman was affected, I think, by his huge budget, far bigger than any past picture of his has had—affected not in terms of his immediate future (he's already making a new film whether *The Serpent's Egg* makes a profit or not) but in intrinsic terms. It would be pat to say that this expensive picture would be better if it had cost less, but certainly there seem to have been pressures on and in Bergman that caused bad judgments.*

The first one was to make the film in English. He had at the time left Sweden and thought he was going to make all his future films in one or another foreign language. Although he was working in Germany and although his German is (said to be) much better than his English, he opted for English—presumably because, even allowing for subsequent dubbings in various countries, English is the most marketable language, the best for a big-budget film. Then he compounded his error by using Liv Ullmann, so we get an actress playing in a plainly foreign language, being directed by a man to whom the language is also foreign. Their private, conversational ability doesn't count: *working* in a foreign language affects *acting*. I think this explains why Ullmann's performance seems strained and why she is sometimes incomprehensible. It may even be a psychological clue as to why she is hoarse so much of the time, as she was in New York in *Anna Christie*, even in *A Doll's House*, but as she never has been in Swedish films. (True, Swedish is another language to the Norwegian Ullmann, but lingual and literal distances are less.)

The third mistake was in orchestration of screen power. Bergman made Ullmann subordinate to David Carradine (of *Bound for Glory*). Her role "feeds" his: and we are supposed to be more interested in that pallid little man than in one of the best living actresses. Bergman apparently felt he needed an American star to "insure" the picture.

Beneath this matter of personality-orchestration is the script's vacuity, particularly in Carradine's role. We're told that Bergman had been working on this script before the tax ruckus over which he left Sweden, so perhaps the script's faults cannot so neatly be ascribed to his (temporary) exile. And he surely had written some flabby ones at home—*The Touch*, for instance, comparable to *The Serpent's Egg* because there, too, Bergman gave the male lead to an insufficient American actor, Elliott Gould. But it is possible that, out of Sweden and knowing the script's new destiny, Bergman, far from consciously cheapening it, insisted on keeping it as it had been, essentially, to prove that change of venue and inflation of budget had not swerved him: and by refusing to reconsider, made it worse.

These troubles, in these forms, do seem attributable to basic discomfiture—conditions at the far end of the spectrum from Bergman's previous, intimate, "family" mode of working. But whatever caused the troubles, they are there, in a picture that wastes a powerful subject.

It is Berlin during the week in November 1923 when, far to the south in Munich, Hitler is attempting the beer-hall *putsch*. Inflation is strangling Germany (though in fact it was halted by Hjalmar Schacht only two weeks later). Through this Berlin that is divided between a mass of gray ghosts, some early Nazi thugs, and some profiteering revelers, there floats an American, Carradine, who is a circus acrobat turned alcoholic. At the start the brother with whom he lives commits suicide. Carradine goes to tell the brother's estranged wife, Ullmann, who is now performing in a sleazy cabaret à la Dietrich in *The Blue Angel*. (What a thing to do to Ullmann, to make her compete with one of the iconic high points in film history. She does well enough, but Dietrich's icon is safe.)

Without detailing the story—and details would not make it more cogent—it includes the revelation that one of Ullmann's lovers, a doctor, is a former boyhood chum of Carradine's and is now a mad scientist experimenting on human beings; and that the doctor and the police inspector who investigates the brother's suicide are both haunted by the shadow of Hitler in the south. We are meant to see Carradine as a stranger floating apathetically through a numbed world, frightened into inaction, as that world waits for the rough beast to slouch up from the south. (The tiny serpent, fully formed, is already in the egg.)

But if you add a pallid actor to a nebulous role, the result is a patch of fog drifting through the center of the picture. What we get is a very dull protagonist, with no conviction of terror, with no trace of any potential quality that is inhibited by this situation: a zero instead of an objective correlative for the apathy that helped Hitler to advance. And this zero moves through a series of contrived episodes, some leadenly portentous, some incredibly corny. Would you ever have thought to see a scene in a Bergman film in which

*Bergman now says it cost $4 million. Still astronomical on the Bergman scale.

Films Worth Seeing

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Padre Padrone. A young Sardinian shepherd fights his domineering father for a life of his own. Some heavy artiness, much hard and moving validity.

SK

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two men struggle at the bottom of an elevator shaft while the elevator grinds down toward them?

Among the many flaws is a worse than gratuitous scene in a brothel involving the young American black actor, Glynn Turman. (What happens to Bergman's taste when he casts Americans?) Much of the editing in the film is hyperdramatic, showing a real unease in the director, a lack of the subtlety that comes only from surety—like the cuts from the opening slow-motion shots of the gray crowd to the titles with jazz under them, or the cut from a woman selling horsemeat in the street to a blackface band in a nightclub.

The look of the picture is exquisite. The sets and costumes are by Rolf Zehetbauer and Charlotte Fleming, who did the same work for *Cabaret*, and the cinematographer is a master, Sven Nykvist. The first sequence, in which Carradine lurches drunkenly down his street, into his boarding house where a party is in progress, and up the stairs to find his brother dead (we see the dead man only at a distance) is so finely controlled, so sure, so wonderful-*looking* that we feel we are at the beginning of a momentous film. The look remains; all else dissipates.

Some Bergman tics can be noted: once again the use of the name Vergérus for a doctor (as in *The Magician*); the scene with a priest (reminiscent of *Winter Light*); the morgue scene (*Persona*); the inserts of other film material (several previous pictures). Also Bergman makes an "in" film joke. The police inspector tells an assistant that he's expecting Inspector Lohmann, who is working on another insane case. I take this to be a reference to Fritz Lang's *M*, even though it wasn't made until eight years after the date of this story.

One further bother. The film differs in a number of ways from the screenplay published by Pantheon, which of course doesn't matter, but one change just increases confusion. At the end the inspector tells Carradine he will be deported at state expense. Carradine thanks him. In the film, not in the book, a voice adds that Carradine escaped from the police en route to the railroad station and disappeared—forever.

This last touch only makes the picture more vulnerable as one of those pictures so often derided by literary and other critics for their glib, hollow "movie" complexity. What does that last bit add or signify? Bergman, who has made some of the best films in history, has also made some that are only shells of seriousness (*The Touch, Cries and Whispers*). This new film is one of his hollowest.

He has spoken often of his youthful visits to Germany in the 1930s when he sometimes went to Nazi meetings with his hosts. Possibly *The Serpent's Egg* is an attempt to exorcise guilt, to pay his dues. I wish the currency had been sounder. What's important, however, is that he is working again. I hope that the new picture, now being made in Norway, is in his own language or (at least!) Norwegian; and that the budget will help him concentrate on intent, not extent.

Dersu Uzala (New World). Even worse news from another great director. When Akira Kurosawa's last previous picture *Red Beard* was released here in 1969, I said that no film of his should go unnoticed; nor should it. But *Red Beard* was excellently made, it suffered only from a soapy script. *Dersu Uzala*, a Japanese-Soviet co-production, is very ordinarily made and has a 1930-type Soviet didactic script. It's about an educated man, a surveyor in Siberia, and his native guide, one of the People, and how the former learns from the latter. Only one sequence, in which the guide hastily constructs a shelter against an oncoming storm, is shot and edited like the Kurosawa of old. The rest is more sad than bad.

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Michael Ullman on jazz

Rahsaan Roland Kirk

Before Rahsaan Roland Kirk died last month at the age of 41, he had recorded tributes to Fats Waller, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Lester Young, Thelonious Monk, Sidney Bechet, Don Byas, Roy Haynes, Charles Mingus, Clifford Brown, Barney Bigard, and John Coltrane. Known for his

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astonishing ability to play as many as three instruments at the same time, often with at least one in tune, Kirk was an aggressive publicist of the whole tradition of black music: he would surprise a hip audience by picking up a clarinet and playing a reckless, dotty solo in the style of old New Orleans, and, while touring with the rock band The Who in the '60s, he regularly lectured his youthful admirers on the dangers of electronics. If things go on the way they have been, he would say, people will have to plug themselves in to make love. He loved to lecture, heckle and inveigh: the cover of one of his albums tells us "You Must Read The Back of This Album," and the title of another is *Prepare Yourself to Deal With a Miracle*. He liked to talk about love and sing about sex—come on baby, he would plead, let me shake your tree. I would say that he often had his tongue in his cheek, except that it is difficult to predict where might be the tongue of a man who plays three instruments simultaneously. In a small dark room in Detroit, named the Ibo Cultural Center by someone with an inflated view of his club or a dismal vision of the future of the Ibos, I heard Kirk lecture the already convinced audience about the need to support black composers. Earlier he had played a duet with a tambourine player, demonstrating that black music need not rely on electronic gimmickry. Now he noted that black composers—even those as prominent as Ellington—do not receive enough attention, and that black musicians and audiences must take the responsibility for publicizing them. Then he played a medley of Gershwin tunes.

Born in Columbus, Ohio in 1936 and blinded soon after, Kirk said that the idea of playing several instruments at the same time came to him in a dream. Along with the tenor sax, he learned to play two obscure saxophones called the manzello and stritch, thin-sounding relatives of the alto and the soprano. Since then, Kirk has been recorded playing the clarinet, flute and piccolo, English horn, harmonium, and a variety of other instruments, including bells, gongs, whistles, sirens and cymbals. He invented an instrument by taking the bell of a trombone and attaching a reed mouthpiece. He played the nose flute—one would rather hear about it than see it played—and he prefaced his "Fly Town Nose Blues" (on *Bright Moments*, Atlantic SD-2-907) by mentioning how few of us, cocaine addicts excepted, ever do anything for our noses.

Kirk made his first album in 1956 for the King label, an organization with limited distribution that did little for his career. In 1960 he began to make a name for himself when he recorded for the Chicago label Argo. Immediately the recording created controversy, and soon Kirk was condemned by those uncomfortable with the vaudeville aspects of his performances. In 1963 a disgruntled Leroi Jones wrote about the New York night club, The Five Spot: "In a city that is just bursting at the seams with young cooking musicians, the Spot seemed content to lay with Roland Kirk" (*Black Music*). Kirk was 27 at the time, and had been before a large public for less than three years, but Jones talked about him as if he were old and established. Jones was offended when he saw Kirk spin a bass on his head while holding a note on the saxophone.

Rahsaan Roland Kirk. Courtesy of Atlantic Records.

But the Argo record is relatively restrained, featuring Kirk playing multiple instruments only occasionally, as at the beginning of "The Call." The record (Argo 669) is notable for Kirk's gentle version of "Our Love is Here to Stay," and for the relaxed "Our Waltz." Kirk sounds like a mainstream player who remains unaffected by the new waves of Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, or even, for that matter, John Coltrane.

The gospel influence evident in "Spirit Girl" on the Argo album was also being exploited by Charles Mingus at the same time, and "Spirit Girl," with its developing call and response patterns, makes Kirk's move to Mingus's band in 1961 seem inevitable. Kirk made *Oh Yeah* with Mingus (Atlantic 1377): many of the characteristics of this Mingus recording became typical of Kirk. "Ecclusiastics" is a Mingus tribute to his church influences: Kirk quotes "Down by the Riverside" in a solo that looks forward to his clarinet pieces in the Dixieland style. Kirk solos in the mournful Mingus tune, "Oh Lord, Dear Lord, Don't Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb On Me," a composition whose mock-serious lyrics and melancholy melody suggest later Kirk pieces. He performs in Mingus's bumptious tribute to Fats Waller, the suggestive "Eat That Chicken." This session is emotional, as Mingus is hollering in the background; it draws on jazz traditions, commenting on them humorously; and it is striking for its loosely swinging ensembles. The music is varied and good fun.

In 1961 Kirk started recording for Mercury, a company he left in 1965 when he went to Atlantic, his recording company to the end. Several of Kirk's records for Mercury have been reissued by Trip, but even these are becoming hard to find. Mercury has issued a two record set featuring his compositions (*Kirk's Works*, Mercury EMS-2-411). On this album one can hear "From Bechet, Byas, and Fats," his tribute to three seemingly diverse styles. Kirk explained: "This represents Sidney Bechet on manzello—not the way he would play it but with the force. The bass and piano are like Waller and the tenor like Don. I'm not trying to play any of their stuff note for note; it's the groove they put me in—the way they inspire me for what I want to write and play."

Kirk's "No Tonic Prez" demonstrates his usefulness as a commentator on jazz history. The tune is a tribute to Lester Young, the soft-toned lazy sounding tenor player who prepared the way for bop, but it is played in the style of Coltrane, whose assertive rhythm and harsh tone seem antithetical to Prez. Kirk comments: "The head doesn't have a tonic (the layman might think I'm talking about a drink). It's a riff that I heard Prez use and I extended the line to utilize all the horn, from top to bottom. I know Prez's music so I'm able to extend myself on what he has done, instead of just trying to play his licks. Coltrane

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does Prez-like things on the horn but he extends them." The attentive listener can hear the connection, as if Coltrane were playing Lester Young.

Influenced by jazz musicians from Fats Waller onward, Kirk continued to develop through the '60s. He relinquished no instrument or style. Eclectic, Rahsaan (this name also came to him in a dream) had what Ira Gitler called the biggest ears in the business. Not surprisingly he began to sound something like John Coltrane: he recorded a three part tribute to Trane for Atlantic (SD-2-303).

Kirk was the ideal festival performer. Self-involved and intense, undistracted by time limits or anxious promoters, he created his own atmosphere and possessed his own "hip vibrations," as he called them. Led on stage, he was a striking sight—a walking pawnshop, Whitney Balliett called him. Kirk's dark glasses and jutting jaw, his full lips and large build, suggested his weight and power. Yet he looked older than he was. He walked slowly but played passionately, feeling for the three saxophones and assorted smaller instruments hung constantly from his neck, moving quickly from song to song, stopping only to talk to an audience to get a sense of its mood, building toward a climax. Kirk played ballads, spirituals, and his own compositions. Given 40 minutes on stage before a large audience, he would stomp, rip and roar until he got the tumultuous response he wanted.

Not every influence on Kirk was beneficial. In a reunion concert with Mingus at Carnegie Hall, Kirk listened to the post-Coltrane saxophone shrieks of Hamiett Bluiett, and thinking that this must be where it's at, responded with some unmusical squeaking of his own. Nor were all of Kirk's experiments successful. He explains on one record that he is going to play an Ellington tune and that he will himself represent all the reed parts of the Ellington band. The parts are all there, but each is rendered feebly and intermittently. On "Prepare Yourself to Deal With a Miracle," Kirk plays for 20 or so minutes without stopping for breath—he had learned the technique of a circular breathing from Harry Carney. But the solo is annoying and tiresome.

In 1976 Kirk had a stroke that left one half of his body nearly paralyzed. Almost immediately he began playing with what he had left. No one can deny his courage or his confidence. Before he died last month of a second stroke, Kirk was honored by two recorded tributes: by Freddie Hubbard on *Bundle of Joy* (Columbia 34902) and by Billy Hart on *Enchance* (Horizon SP-725).

More tributes to Rahsaan Roland Kirk will be forthcoming. Not an avant-garde player, Kirk was an innovator only in technique. Few people will follow his lead in playing more than one instrument simultaneously or in trying to play wind instruments without breathing. Nevertheless, Kirk was a force in music: he brought a whole range of jazz styles to audiences who would never have heard them otherwise. He never stopped listening, learning, and struggling. He holds many odd distinctions: *Downbeat Magazine* had to create the category of Miscellaneous Instruments in its jazz polls in order to accommodate Kirk's offerings. And he is surely the only blind man to have been dragged off a plane as a suspected hijacker: somewhere about his body he was carrying a ceremonial knife, the airline explained. Critic Joachim Berendt said Kirk had "all the wild untutored quality of a street musician coupled with the subtlety of a modern jazz musician." That wild quality can be heard on *The Jaki Byard Experience* (Prestige 7615). On this album, Kirk solos in the gospel tune "Shine on Me" ("Let the light from the lighthouse shine on me"). There is no parody in his clarinet playing here: only joy. Kirk himself was at times competitive, perhaps even abrasive. Too often in his recording he reached for some technical trick that added little to his playing. But at its best, Kirk's music was filled with the wild spirit that informs the greatest jazz: hearing him, one can almost feel that music, like the Lord in "Shine on Me," can "heal the sick and raise the dead."

John Canaday on art

Gregory Gillespie, and Why the Whitney Should be Kicking Itself

I like to think that a few years from now—five? 10?—we are going to see the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art kicking themselves because they lacked the courage or the perception to stage the Gregory Gillespie retrospective currently at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington (until Feb. 12). The Whitney, in fact, may start kicking itself immediately. The Modern's field is worldwide and, of late, patently historical rather than exploratory, but the Whitney's field is limited to the United States and its avowed function includes the encouragement of contemporary production. But when it comes to living Americans the Whitney prefers to play safe with artists already well publicized as extremists with backing among the critics, or firmly established as historical figures, like Jasper Johns. The Whitney Museum's sop to its exploratory function is the grab-bag Whitney Annual.

The Hirshhorn's Gillespie retrospective demanded a more adventurous approach than the Modern's recently adopted one, and a more imaginative approach than the Whitney has demonstrated under any of its directors. Gregory Gillespie is an American realist of a prophetic kind. Unlike the photorealists and hyperrealists, who have established themselves as leaders in the pendulum-swing away from abstraction, Gillespie puts a similar acutely detailed reproduction of visual reality into the service of profound and often disturbing introspection. Nothing in his work so much as suggests the deadpan objectivity that masks whatever the photo- and hyperrealists have to say—and what they have to say is, at most, social comment rather than intimate soliloquy.

Gillespie is one of the most personal artists who ever painted—and therein lies his prophetic quality. For if 20th-century American realism is to become more than the glut of expertly reproduced images and tricky illusionism that we can already see just around the corner, it must become again the expressive medium that it was for such revolutionaries or great individualists as Van Eyck, Masaccio, Mantegna, Dürer, Caravaggio, Rembrandt, Courbet, Degas and, in our own country and time, Thomas Eakins—a partial list sufficiently varied to hint at the limitless range of realistic painting's traditional but inex-

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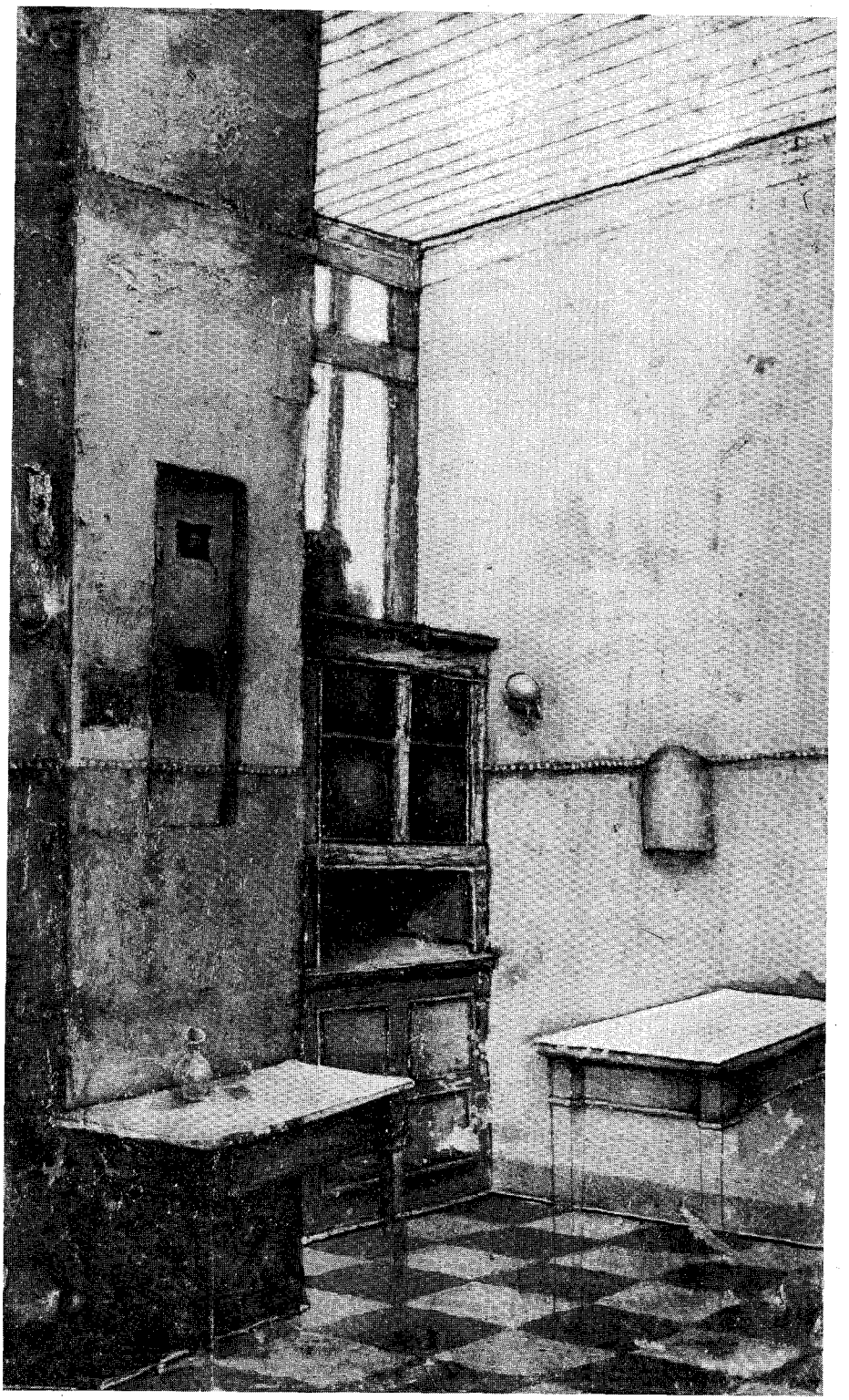
haustible function, which is to reveal the psychological and spiritual worlds that animate the visible world around us.

If Gillespie must be allied to a specific branch of the realistic tradition, it must be to the Flemish-Germanic one of Van Eyck and Dürer. But let that go for the moment. In the first rooms of the chronologically hung retrospective, anyone unfamiliar with Gillespie's development might be puzzled to find himself in the presence of a fantasist rather than a realist, a painter of scatological morbidities, abnormal and mutilated bodies, visionary landscapes, and sinister deformations of bedraggled city streets and the interiors of their decaying houses, the tenements of the soul. (Even here, though, there are Flemish connotations in Gillespie's echoes of Hieronymus Bosch's proto-Freudian hell on earth.) In the earlier pictures, too, there are multiple violations of the picture surface—punctures through which we see smaller pictures, and rough three-dimensional overlays as if the early Gillespie feared the impeccable Flemish paint surface that he has adopted in his latest work.



Trattoria (1966) Mixed media; 9½" x 6". From the collection of Bella and Sol Fishko, courtesy of the Hirshhorn Museum.

Let us say right here that in terms of sheer painterliness—that is, the technique of applying paint to a surface—Gregory Gillespie in his most recent paintings has few peers in the 20th century and can command favorable comparison with his ancestors in the 15th and 16th. The Hirshhorn retrospective and Gillespie's development so far culminate in four self-portraits dated 1973/74, 1975, 1976/77, and a slightly later one of the same split year. The earliest of the four (reproduced in *The New Republic*, issue of Oct. 1, 1977) shows the artist seated on a sagging mattress in a bare room, his arms and hands in positions that suggest the exposure of the right arm for a hypodermic injection by the left hand—but there is no needle. The reference, I suspected (a suspicion later verified), is personal, to Gillespie's rejection of drugs taken for a while as an experiment in intensifying levels of perception.

The next two portraits are of a long-haired young man with the tortured face of a desert saint, his nude torso shown to a point just a few inches below the nipples (the most meticulously rendered male nipples in the history of painting, surely). The fourth shows Gillespie seated in his studio, wearing slacks and a handsome sweater, freshly crew-cut and self-assured but still questioning. In all four he stares intently at us; we take the place of the mirror. In sequence, the portraits are the record so far of a personality in struggle for fulfillment.

When I showed these self-portraits recently during a lecture on American realism, one member of the audience fumed at the "intolerable conceit" of an artist who thus recorded himself. The objection, of course, is indefensible. In their intensity Gillespie's self-portraits are comparable to Vincent van Gogh's, although they rise above Vincent's in their analytical severity. Basically they are more comparable, although in total contrast stylistically, to Rembrandt's, which over a much longer period of time recorded the evolution of the painter from his youthful ebullient self to a tragic philosopher of the human condition in old age.

I find the closest historical parallel, however, between what I have already called Gillespie's desert-saint self-portraits and one of Dürer's in which he portrayed himself as Christ. This exercise was not quite as audacious as it sounds even though we know that

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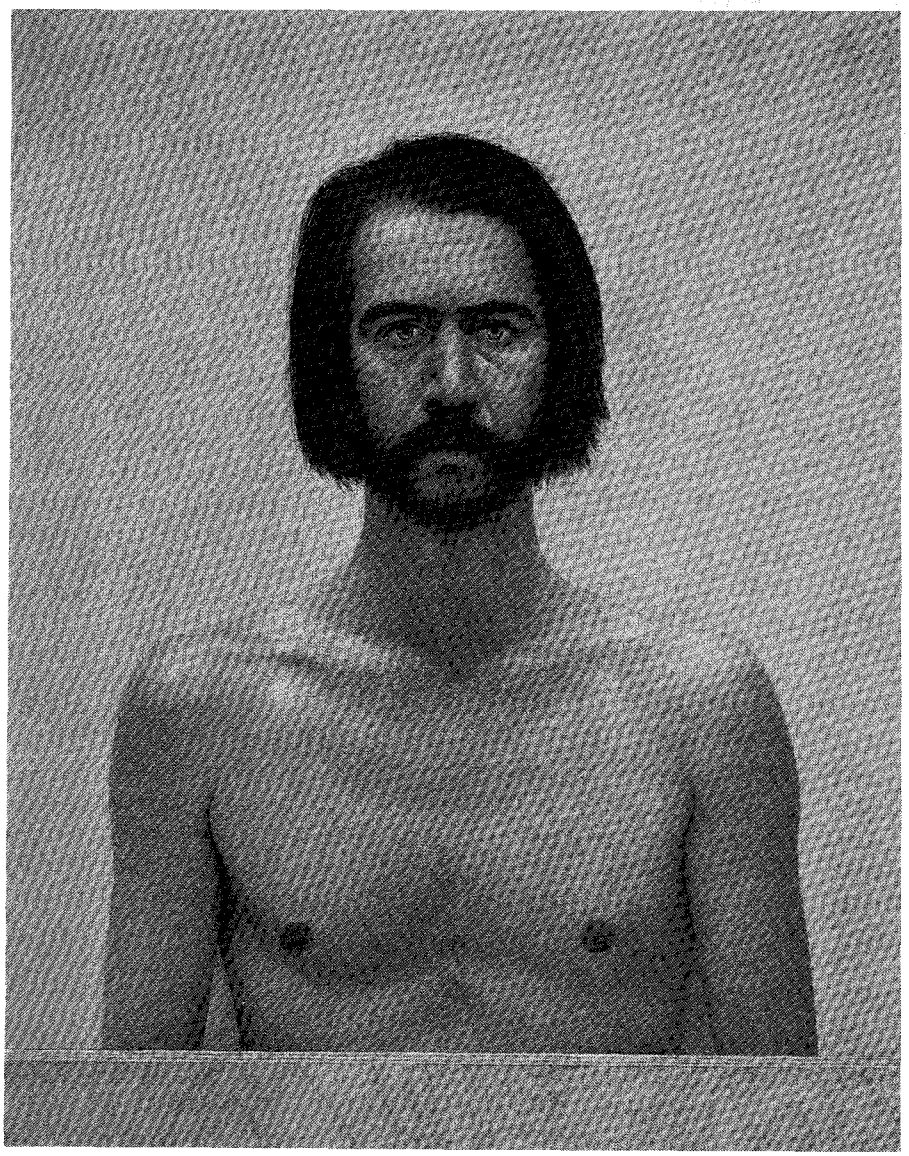

Self-Portrait (Torso) (1975) Oil and magna on wood; 30¼" × 24¾" From the collection of Sidney and Frances Lewis.

Dürer as a young man was vain of his good looks. Dürer was one of the first painter-philosophers to reject the medieval concept of the painter as super-craftsman and to establish the Renaissance concept of the painter (of genius) as gifted by God to serve as an instrument of revelation. His self-portrait as Christ was not personal but symbolic. If Gillespie doesn't go quite that far, his self-portraits at least recognize the significance of artists as exceptional individuals who, in the course of acquiring self-knowledge, may help us to discover knowledge of ourselves.

I would like to make the point here, emphatically, that everything I have written in this article is based on my reactions to the paintings alone. I have been sufficiently interested in Gillespie's art to avoid reading anything written about it, including the introduction to the retrospective's handsome catalogue by Abram Lerner, director of the Hirshhorn Museum, and an extended interview with Gillespie, also in the catalogue, by Mr. Lerner and his colleague Howard Fox. For all I know, Gillespie's interview may refute everything I have said. But I believe that while an artist's ideas about his work may be interesting, nothing counts but the work itself. It must speak without a prompter, for the artist will not always be around to speak for it nor, thank God, will the critics. My only contact with Mr. Gillespie, except for a brief and unrevealing conversation at the retrospective's opening reception, has been an abusive letter he wrote me after my review of one of his earliest exhibitions in which I somehow managed to offend him—just how, I forget.

Aside from the opportunity to see gathered together a large number of paintings that I had known piecemeal in exhibitions at the Forum Gallery in New York, I take pleasure in the Gillespie show as an unintended rebuke to the Whitney and, to a lesser degree, the Museum of Modern Art. Compare the Gillespie show with the Whitney's safe (and horribly expensive) Jasper Johns retrospective, which, although historically valid, was just about as stimulating and revealing as the average graduation-day valedictory address delivered by the brightest boy in the class, or with the Modern's choice of Sol LeWitt as a contemporary artist ripe for laureation in an exhibition that will run from February 3rd to April 4th. Mr. LeWitt has been a leading figure in the once outré but now weary pseudo-intellectual movement called conceptual art, and an exhibition of his ideas is, again, historically valid, but only if you are fascinated by footnotes.

Both the Johns and the LeWitt exhibitions are concerned with what art has been in the United States. The Gillespie exhibition is about what art is going to be, whether Gillespie or someone else brings the reinvigoration of the realistic tradition to its 20th-century fruition. The exhibition is as much a tribute to the alertness of Mr. Lerner at the Hirshhorn, and to the patience and foresight of Gillespie's patron-dealer, Bella Fishko, as it is to the artist himself. It is also gratifying to read the list of awards that sustained

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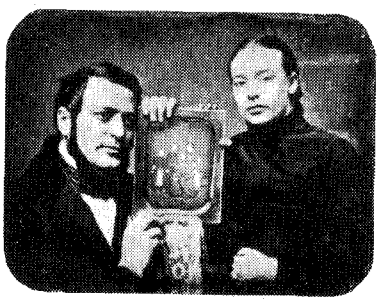

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Gillespie before he became, as he now is, a saleable artist at good prices. These include a Fulbright-Hays Grant renewed for a second year, a Chester Dale Fellowship renewed for a second and then a third year, the Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation Award "to a younger painter who has not yet been accorded due recognition," and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant, among others.

The catalogue, as next-best to a visit to the retrospective, can be had through the Hirshhorn Museum for $8.50.

Books Considered

The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of American Diplomacy by Laurence Stern

(Times Books; $12.50)

There is a memorable scene in *The Wrong Horse* when then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger meets the distraught Cypriot Ambassador within hours of the ominous July 1974 coup toppling the regime of Archbishop Makarios in Cyprus. Who was this Nikos Sampson? Kissinger disingenuously asked the envoy about the convicted terrorist and fanatic murderer who had seized power in Nicosia. As the ambassador accurately described Sampson with the words "paranoid" and "egomaniac," Kissinger smilingly bantered back, "But I have been called an egomaniac too."

"You should not compare yourself with Sampson, Mr. Secretary," the ambassador replied grimly.

The incident seems to capture at once much of the ignorance, the dissimulation, the fecklessness that so long marked Washington's response to the inflamed ethnic politics of Cyprus. Bitterly divided for centuries between an 80 percent Greek majority wanting union *(enosis)* with the mother country and an 18 percent Turkish minority under the geographic and military shadow of its ancestral homeland, the small Mediterranean island moved punctually from crisis to crisis since independence in 1959. The constant threat of war between NATO allies Greece and Turkey posed not only enormous human costs, but also the wider danger of instability on the old volatile frontier of the Balkans and the Mideast. And poised uneasily between the Greek plots, Turkish irredenta and great power rivalries was an ostensibly nonaligned regime of the imperious and protean Makarios, treating on all sides with a mutual and Byzantine distrust. *Washington Post* National Editor Laurence Stern has now traced how American foreign policy managed to make that Cyprus mess even worse, climaxing in the Greek overthrow of Makarios and a bloody Turkish seizure of nearly half the island in the summer of 1974.

The major elements of the policy debacle—neglected intelligence, chronic CIA complicity and bungling, maladroit diplomacy and indifference to the humanitarian tragedy—are by now depressingly familiar in the larger record of our recent foreign relations. But Stern tells the Cyprus chapter with fresh color and pungent detail. The first half of the book centers on Washington's chummy, myopic support of the torturing Greek colonels who seized power in Athens in 1967 and whose chauvinism and weakness precipitated the 1974 disaster in Cyprus. Stern then unravels a sequence of missed signals and blunders by which Kissinger and the Watergate stricken Nixon-Ford administration played a decisive role in the July 1974 coup and ensuing bloodshed. Among the debris a year later were not only thousands dead and 200,000 refugees, but also American prestige and interests in the region and the Executive's credibility with the Congress and public.

US policy in 1974 and before, writes Stern, "was one of vacillation, impotence and indifference to legal and constitutional principle." Much of the responsibility he convincingly ascribes to Kissinger personally, his reactionary approach to world politics and his self destructive dictatorship over US foreign policy. Yet *The Wrong Horse* is also revealing in its parade of lesser and less visible officials who shared—or at least acquiesced in—the stupidity or colo bloodedness. There is, for example, the US career ambassador in Athens, a 30 year bureaucrat and Nixon favorite Henry Tasca, whose insoucian diplomacy with both the junta and the State Department (Stern calls it a "pathetic . . . shadow play") was crucial Or deputy undersecretary Joseph Sisco another durable bureaucrat who brought to the pre-coup maneuvering and crisis diplomacy over Cyprus habits of mind and diplomacy evident in his earlier handling of policy in Bangladesh At the same time, Stern makes clear that the larger policy disaster belonged amply to the succession of presidents from Lyndon Johnson through Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, ill-informed politicians whose bipartisan fears and stereotypes were dutifully reflected in the machinations of the CIA or the mindlessness of the diplomats. If Henry Kissinger's singular distractions and obsessions accounted for the worst of our Cyprus policy, *The Wrong Horse* usefully reminds us that in this matter he was hardly alone.

What flaws the book, however, is that Stern has not given us nearly enough of those inner realities of career and personality in foreign policy. The American public—not to mention foreign beneficiaries of our diplomacy like the Cypriots—deserve to know much more about how and why Tasca, the CIA Station Chief in Athens, Sisco, Kissinger, Dean Rusk, or those faithfully lying State Department spokesmen got that way, and how the world's most powerful government misgoverns its power so long and so obliviously. Stern takes us too through some of the routine of folly without explaining what makes it routine. The omission is critical, and we can only hope for more and deeper books from him on similar episodes.

At that, though, we seem lucky to have Stern's Cyprus account at all. He is nearly alone in an impoverished diplomatic journalism, where widespread co-option by Kissinger and a general failure at investigative reporting helped conceal Cyprus and other calamities so long. Moreover, having been written under sponsorship of the Carnegie Endowment and even partially excerpted in *Foreign Policy* in 1975, Stern's hard-hitting manuscript was simply sat upon by its apparently nervous or

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different foundation patrons for more an a year before the author pried it ose for this long-overdue and valuble publication by Times Books.

None of this is academic or dry history y any means. Cyprus, and problems ke it, remain festering uncertainties on ne international horizon. Reporters ho missed the story are still relied pon to report; foundations which bury controversial manuscripts are still relied upon to pursue the public interest. And many of the officials high and low, who made our shocking record on the island are still in office. You will recognize in Stern's pages one of the less able and unreconstructed of our Cyprus "trouble shooters" from 1967. His name is still Cyrus Vance, except that now he is Secretary of State.

Roger Morris

Adultery and Other Choices
by Andre Dubus

Godine; $8.95)

During his first meal in America, Martin Chuzzlewit observes a curious native custom: there are about 20 diners around the table, of whom, Dickens tells us, five or six are "ladies, who sat wedged together in a little phalanx by themselves," and who, at the end of the meal's only course, file out. "And there," says Dickens, "was an end of *them*." He goes on to observe that Martin, snob, egoist and Victorian though he is, finds such separation uncomfortable, but that the American gentlemen "now lounged about the stove as if a great weight had been taken off their minds by the withdrawal of the other sex."

If the distance between the sexes here appeared extreme even by the norms of an Englishman of the 1840s, it is hardly surprising that the chasm has lasted over the years, refusing even now to be entirely bridged. Or that the ordinary progress of sexual relationships, courtship, marriage, adultery, has been treated consistently more shyly in American fiction than it has in European: shrouded in allegory by Hawthorne and Faulkner, wrapped in wishful thinking by Hemingway and Mailer, and speared by Philip Roth and others on the sort of satire reserved in cozier cultures for political opponents. There are of course exceptions to this; most notably Henry James, who explored relationships between men and women, father and daughter, friend and friend, lover and lover, with more insight than Dostoevski and more precision than Flaubert. But then, he spent his life abroad.

And an extraordinary number of American writers who stayed at home have chosen to remain on their own side of the sexual divide as well. Being men, they have either written only about men, or permitted into their fiction no woman but the one inevitable in a man's life, his mother. America has given fond succor to the image of man entangled in the maternal web, popular in all fiction since fiction first began. But America has also been a nursery for, among others, the sea novel and the war novel, the furthest fictional reaches I would think possible from the womb.

In his recent collection of short stories, *Adultery and Other Choices*, Andre Dubus considers this puzzle of separation and discomfort in American life. He examines a variety of relationships; family relationships, friendships between women, camaraderie between men, marriage, adultery. He writes of men and women in isolation from each other, and of men and women together. But, most particularly, he focuses on that monstrous division between the two, possibly conceived in nature, probably exaggerated by our culture and our values, and described by Dubus in poignant detail as an integral part of his characters' daily lives. I can think of no-one who has drawn a more precise map of that no-man's land between the sexes than he has in this collection and in his earlier *Separate Flights*. And even in fiction written by women or journalistic accounts of how women live, it would be difficult to find as painful or as accurate

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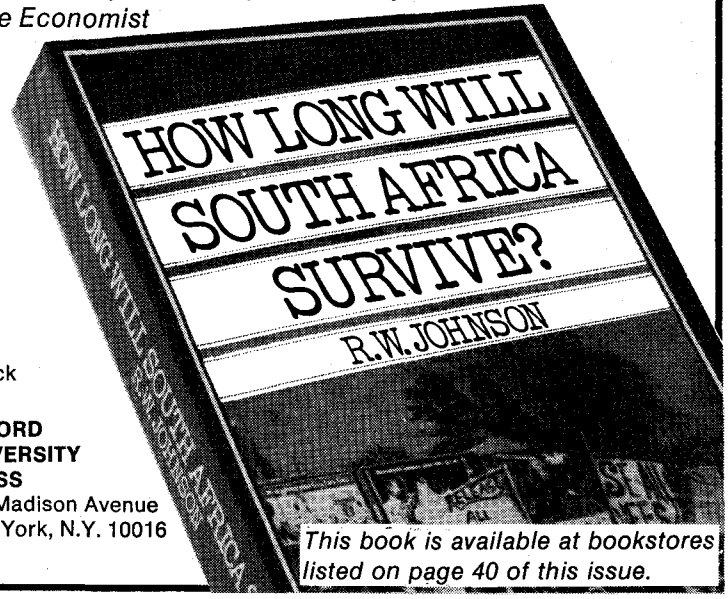

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a description of the futilities of keeping house as there is here in "Andromache" or in his earlier "We Don't Live Here Anymore."

The force of women absent is as palpable as their presence is. And the influences of marriage and passion are far less powerful in these stories than a more negative pressure, a vacuum in communication which begins as silence between husband and wife, and ends by inhaling husband, wife, children and society into a conspiracy of isolation. Where love, or even the desire for love, exist, life is sane; in "Graduation," for instance, where a much-used girl decides to become a virgin again. Or in "Cadence," in which a young officer candidate for the Marine Corps counsels his friend, Paul, "'to get a girl again. There's nothing like it. . . . *Noth*ing. It's another world, man.'" Secure in his affections, he can afford to weigh his needs against the dehumanizing demands of the Corps, and leave. But Paul has long since been sucked into the void which existed between his parents. He has signed the Marine contract because he thinks it will please his father, and because the recruiting captain had appeared "like salvation . . . wearing the blue uniform and manly beauty that would fulfill Paul's dreams." In the confusion in which he lives, he needs the clear certainty of masculine order and approval, and the story ends as, his friend gone, he dissolves "into unity with the rest of the platoon."

Dubus himself spent five years in the Marine Corps, which exists in several of these stories as the antithesis of all things instinctual, sexual and growing. It is not, in itself, really evil, or even inhuman. But its humanity springs from the need for silence, for peace from women and from life, and for the certain ritual which will replace the uncertainty of understanding.

'Nothing growing, nothing moving,'

says one Marine to another in "Corporal of Artillery."

'Nothing but Marines,' Fitzgerald said.
'Like I said: nothing,'

answers the first. And in "The Shooting," Sergeant Everett, admiring a photograph of himself taken to commemorate his killing of a sad, paranoid sailor, sees himself in it "forever poised in peaceful silence," the prototype of the successful, well-adjusted military man.

The best of the stories about Marine Corps life, and perhaps the best story in the collection, is "Andromache," which makes explicit the conflict between the male compulsion for protocol, bravado and death, and the paradoxical female need to nurture and sustain what will only end by destroying itself. To nurture and sustain, moreover, without disturbing the great male rituals. The story, which is written from the point of view of Ellen, a Marine Officer's wife, widowed by his latest quest for adventure, recalls their last Christmas together and her attempt to give a Christmas party for her husband's men. The party is a failure; the complex arrangement of Marine manners keeps the enlisted men from showing up. Ellen is hurt, but represses her anger at the waste of her food, her effort, in the all-encompassing need to be a good sport, to pull in her stomach, to mourn, finally, in silence. *"Be a strong Marine,"* she says to her small son as he starts to cry at his father's funeral. While her daughter has already learned the lesson of self-repression, and, at the age of nine, knows as much as her mother does about control and selflessness in the face of the male needs and abandonments which have been the lot of military wives since Andromache.

But, by extension, all wives are military wives, and the Marines only the most potent of those institutions in which a man can feel his manhood safe from interruption. There is some security even in the lesser sports. In poker, for instance, and in golf. Men jog together to express their friendship and to get away from their wives, and though families speak often to each other with affection, they speak around secrets and gaps of the unspeakable.

The center of the book's first three stories is the child, Paul, who grows up to be the young Marine of "Cadence." In "An Afternoon with the Old Man" he is urged by his mother on an expedition into male territory with his father. Silent at home, his father becomes drunk and expansive on the golf course, courting his son's affection with praise and grape soda, while Paul feels he has become his mother's spy in this land forbidden her. In "Contrition" a French horn is the symbol of all that is not articulated between his parents, and Paul's own inadequacies in the face of that. And in "The Bully" his misery at the hands of the class bully is balanced against his helpless imitation of the bully's sadism, and his identification with his lonely death.

Ambivalence is the pivot of Dubus's world, which is a world in splinters, where men and women face in opposite directions, and Catholic mother and Protestant father do not meet sufficiently even to disagree. A man, to fe himself a man, must sacrifice himself o the altar of masculine ritual, and eve adultery stems from routine and a sens of what one owes oneself more than does from real feeling.

It is impossible to escape the suspicio that most of these stories have a autobiographical source, especiall those in which Dubus patently dis parages the masculine ideals of th protagonist. Most of the women emerg triumphantly human; Ellen of "An dromache," Bobbie, the restored virgi of "Graduation," and Louise, "The Fa Girl," who goes on a diet just lon enough to discover that fat is what sh is, and that any love worth the name ca find her under the blubber. Thes women, and Paul's unposturing, gentl failing friends, are the valiant of th earth; the others are oppressed by thei maleness as by a burden. It is his abilit at once to understand the strong and t exonerate the silly which makes Dubus' writing enormously engaging.

The title story, "Adultery," is the las and longest in the book, and in it Dubu tries to arrive at some sort of accom modation for all the fragments of hi universe. The accommodation is uncom fortable and difficult, for the reader, think, as well as for the characters, sinc it invokes a sexual answer for a spiritua need, and a spiritual answer for a sexua one; a combination which present notable problems of perspective also i D.H. Lawrence, of whom Dubus ofte reminds one.

In "Adultery," Joe Ritchie leaves th priesthood not because he has lost faith but because he feels the need to com plete himself by being loved by a woman "'I must have a woman,'" he says t himself when he is drunk. But the nee is much more than physical, and he see women as beings beyond the grasp o religion, beings whose nature combine passion and instinct, and whose visits t his confessional are merely "a distan and dutiful salute to the rules an patterns of men."

He is a marvelously Romantic figure but to fulfill himself he chooses a rathe colorless partner, Episcopalian Edit from Winnetka; the wife of a philander ing, callow writer, she has already ha several affairs, but keeps a clean house Soon after they fall in love, they discove that Joe is dying, and their adultery transforms itself into a sort of earth bound sacrament, a statement of th flesh made to a distant God in the face o imminent death.

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It is a story large in scope and complex n ambition, and finally Edith's journey rom vacuity to pathos does become noving. But there is no question that Dubus is at his best when he examines he shards of his particular universe, when he charts the islands of domestic nd military routine which define the eas of incomprehension on which his haracters live. Putting the pieces ogether, he is less convincing; one feels he scale of Eternity jarring against the mallness of his people.

But Dubus is an exact and a compelling writer. The power of all these stories is very great, and the direction of the last is interesting. One wonders of what Dubus may be capable when he knows the path better; when he can describe the way to salvation with the same easy authority with which he describes the mined waste-land which stretches between lives.

Edith Milton

Edith Milton's most recent book is *Corridors* (Delacorte).

Literature in the Marketplace
by Per Gedin

Overlook Press; $12.95)

"Fiction is either big or it's dead," one of Per Gedin's blunter informants says in his sobering little book. Gedin, the distinguished president of the Swedish general trade house of Wahlstrom and Widstrand, traces the origins and analyzes the meaning of the publishing crisis as it has affected serious literature, especially the novel. He takes Sweden to be a pilot country for Western Europe and America in terms of its society and book market, and I must say his facts and figures seem to warrant this view. He is widely and deeply informed about the history and present state of publishing, not only in Western Europe, but also in England and the United States, a good deal better informed than most American publishers, I'm afraid.

Gedin provides a comprehensive—and often absorbing—outline of the social and economic reality within which books have been and are produced and with which literary historians and critics would do well to acquaint themselves. He begins with a lively survey of the history of the reading public and the book market, which was essentially a product of the 18th century and bourgeois society, and the disintegration of these beginning sometime between the World Wars and continuing today. He relies heavily for his analysis on sources such as Arnold Hauser, Q.D. Leavis, and certain histories of publishing and autobiographies of publishers. But he makes their arguments work for him and provides plenty of evidence of his own. Similarly, his description of the culture of contemporary mass "service society" is obliged to the analysis of people like Ralf Dahrendorf, Daniel Bell, and Steffan Burenstam-Linder (*The Harried Leisure Class*), but it fits one's own feeling of things as they are. In any case Gedin's account certainly helps to explain why so much of publishing has become a minor division of the entertainment industry.

The chapters on "The Novel in a Changing Society" and "The Economics of the Novel" are central to the book's argument, even though the author is not concerned only with the novel. But he views it as the special product of bourgeois society and as tied in certain ways to the fate of that society. Obviously, as Gedin would agree, the novel is very much alive in its changing forms and functions. But there is no question either that its audience and market have declined in absolute and relative numbers and changed in character. The fact that most of the biggest bestsellers still seem to be novels, including some serious fiction, masks the fact that the unit sales of fiction in this country and elsewhere have been steadily declining, in consequence of which the larger and more established publishers, with some exceptions, are taking fewer and fewer chances with any kind of fiction except chewing gum for the mind.

Gedin uses graphic examples from his own house to show how the fiction market in Sweden has declined over the years in terms of sizes of editions and profit and loss. To go no further back, he shows that about 10 years ago a reasonably efficient publisher could make a good profit if he sold between three and four thousand copies of a middling-sized novel at a very fair price. But only five years ago the "same" book had to sell at least twice as many copies at a greatly inflated price in order to just go beyond "break even." (To help prove one of Gedin's main points, the same situation prevailed here just a couple of years later.) The problem, of course, is that very few works of fiction can hope to sell even four thousand copies any longer. Indeed recently the editor-in-chief of one of the most prominent literary imprints in America told me he could almost not consider taking on *any* book that he did not think would sell at least ten thousand copies. How a house of that character can stay in business at that rate is a question.

Although *Literature in the Marketplace* ought to be of great interest to American publishers, it is by no means concerned only with the economics of publishing. Gedin's whole effort is to show that the publishing crisis is a deep structural one and not merely a temporary difficulty founded on over-

DECADE OF DECISIONS

American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976

William B. Quandt

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production, rising prices, and the economic situation generally. Shockingly enough, he does not hesitate to talk about spiritual values in both society and publishing. Very tellingly he quotes the founder of the great German house, S. Fischer: "The book's incalculable worth puts it in a different category, in a business sense, than a product that has a materially measureable value." Fischer was, of course, talking about books as literature. A slightly different approach was expressed just the other day in a company brochure put out by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. In the interest of making HBJ books more flexible premiums for promotion, the brochure suggests that their books can: carry coupons, be attached to the outside of a product, be packaged inside a product, be imprinted with the client's name and message, be condensed, be bound in a single volume containing three or more related titles, and be offered as business gifts. (Here's an idea: how about condensing *To the Lighthouse* and *Gift From the Sea*, binding them together imprinted with "We do it All for You," and giving it away with every customer's certified hundredth McDonald's fishwich?) The name of this game is, of course, the manipulation of the lowest common denominator of public interest and taste.

As Gedin argues, in the new service society leisure is not so much the basis for culture in any true sense, as it is the state of passive consumption and distraction from distraction by distraction. Therefore the form of book distribution best suited to this society is the book club: "It fills all the requirements for the distribution of books to people who are tired and stressed, who have difficulty making their own selection, who are influenced by the mass media to notice a small number of books, who have little spare time [from leisure activities!] and who find it convenient to have a book automatically delivered to their door." Accordingly, book club sales in the United States, as in Europe, are approaching 50 per cent of all hardcover books sold.

A pretty discouraging picture, if you care about the treasure of the tongue. But the question, as always, is, What is to be done? What can be done? Naturally, Gedin is unsatisfactory in dealing with these questions, except that he is very clear about there not being much help for their fellow citizens in th "cultivated circle's" shrinking into a vici ous one and in their writers' writin for the happy—or miserable—few. Th best hope Gedin can offer is for genuin works of literature to break out of th cultivated circuit into the popular, a they occasionally do even through bool clubs, especially in paperback edition and in libraries. And for the novel an other forms of imaginative literatur the reasons for hope include collectives cooperatives, and old and new smal publishers, who are cheeringly pro liferating in this country. Nor doe Gedin shrink from the outrageous sug gestion that "an immediate and sizeabl contribution by society is needed t preserve and continue to develop th literary book—as much for the sake o society as for the book."

Walter Arnol

Walter Arnold has been an editor o *Commonweal* and for several large trad publishers. He is a free lance writer.

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Mary Curzon
by Nigel Nicolson
(Harper & Row; $10)

Henry James might have written a novel about this marriage between a rich American girl and the young Englishman who was to rule India for the British Empire, George Nathaniel Curzon. James's best early portraits were of young American heiresses set loose in Europe with quantities of freedom, imagination, and money, confronting the values and traditions—and men—of an older world. In the last decades of the 19th century a number of American girls seemed to step directly out of his pages to marry into the English aristocracy: Jennie Jerome married Lord Randolph Churchill in 1874; Mary Endicott became Mrs. Joseph Chamberlain in 1888; Consuelo Vanderbilt in 1895 became the Duchess of Marlborough; and also in 1895 Mary Victoria Leiter married George Curzon. When Curzon was made Viceroy of India in 1899, Mary as Vicereine occupied the highest position ever held in the British Empire by an American.

It was, writes Nigel Nicolson something of a Cinderella story, "if you can accept that Cinderella's father was worth at least $20 million." Levi Z Leiter, a Protestant of Swiss descent made a fortune in Chicago in the 1870s when he sold out to his partner in the dry-goods business in 1881, the firm of Field and Leiter became Marshall Field & Co. The Leiters moved to Washington DC, and Mary came out in 1888 (aged 18), the star of the Washington season. On a trip to London in 1890 she danced with the Prince of Wales and fell in love with George Curzon. Curzon was 31, an MP, the son of a lord, attractive, arrogant, charming, ambitious, and not rich. Mary rejected countless suitors on both sides of the Atlantic while she waited for Curzon to propose, but he did not ask her to marry him until 1893 and then spent two years traveling to the Pamirs and Afghanistan—agonizing years for Mary because the trip was dangerous and their engagement a

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secret. But she waited, and in 1895 they were married.

For three years they lived in London; Mary was acutely unhappy, with nothing to do, no close friends, and a husband who worked all the time. The difference between life as the toast of two nations' capitals and life as the wife of a young Under Secretary was enormous, and Mary's bloom faded when not in the sunlight of public worship. She had no ambitions or intellectual aspirations. Her social success had had everything to do with her marriageability, and once she became Mrs. Curzon all her cards had in a sense been played.

In Isabel Archer and Daisy Miller, James delineated the singular American alchemy that produced alloys of freedom and innocence, of narcissism and curiosity about the world. The young, wealthy American female in pursuit of experience and self in the late 19th century measured Europe against the requirements of her very American imagination—and she imagined a great deal. She believed in love the way other people believed in God, and in marriage as its consecration. Even at her unhappiest, Mary Curzon retained her faith in romantic love. When her younger sister seemed about to marry in 1898 Mary wrote:

> *I think that the sweet test of affection is if you feel that when he comes into a room the band is playing the Star Spangled Banner and that the room is glowing with pink lights and rills are running up and down your back with pure joy. Then it is all right, but don't give your heart away until you feel* all *this, which I feel when George appears.*

"The purpose and triumph of her life," Nicolson points out, "was to be loved by such a man as George Curzon." But what sort of man was he?

In his welcome attempt to make this Mary's story—for there are numerous biographies of her husband, one of them by Nicolson's father—Nigel Nicolson tells somewhat less than would be useful to know about Curzon. George Curzon was a British Teddy Roosevelt, a staunch Imperialist convinced that the British in India were "'the speck of foam upon a dark unfathomable ocean'", that the strong were destined to rule the weak and that he was appointed to govern the strong. His behavior was often bizarre, but Nicolson draws no inferences as to what might have motivated it. Why, for instance, did Curzon take the extremely dangerous trip, during his secret engagement to Mary, to the headwaters of the Oxus at the plateau of the Pamirs—a trip that killed his horse and forced him to climb sheer rock faces and swim in glacier-cold rivers though he had a bad back and was in poor physical condition? And what about the remark (not quoted in *Mary Curzon*) by Lord Kitchener, whose rivalry with Curzon in India led to the latter's downfall: "There is only one thing that Curzon likes more than hurting others, and that is to persuade others to humiliate him"? Why did Curzon marry Mary Leiter? For her money? Nicolson argues no, but is not entirely convincing.

And why for that matter did she marry him? During their engagement he wrote to her: "Give me a girl who knows a woman's place and does not yearn for trousers. Give me in fact Mary." Mary did know a woman's place. She gave her husband the same unquestioning love and admiration she had given her father. She shared Curzon's "broad and splendid" view of himself, and espoused all his ideas as her own.

Their reign in India was brilliant and difficult, and in the limelight of Viceregalty Mary came back to life. She entertained heads of state, wore glorious clothes, toured the huge continent, attended banquets, balls, and tiger shoots, charmed both India and England for her husband, and eventually organized a program for the medical training of Indian women. She was often ill with mysterious headaches and prostrations, and she disliked India's heat and dirt and poverty. But she loved Curzon's new dependence on her. Thousands of miles from London friends and colleagues, embattled in controversy, Curzon turned to Mary for everything except political advice. She was his sole comfort and support in private, his adjunct and champion in public. And she had her triumph: if he didn't love her when they married, he did when she died.

She died rather mysteriously, of "devilish ills", at the age of 36. Two years before, she had come so near death that she said good-bye to her children and made funeral plans. Curzon wrote down everything she said, and Nicolson presents the record as evidence "of his profound emotion, and of a love for her as deep as a man can feel for a woman." Yet it seems curiously flat. As in *Portrait of a Marriage*, his book about his parents, Nicolson refrains from interpretation, from looking beneath what his subjects have to say about themselves. What was

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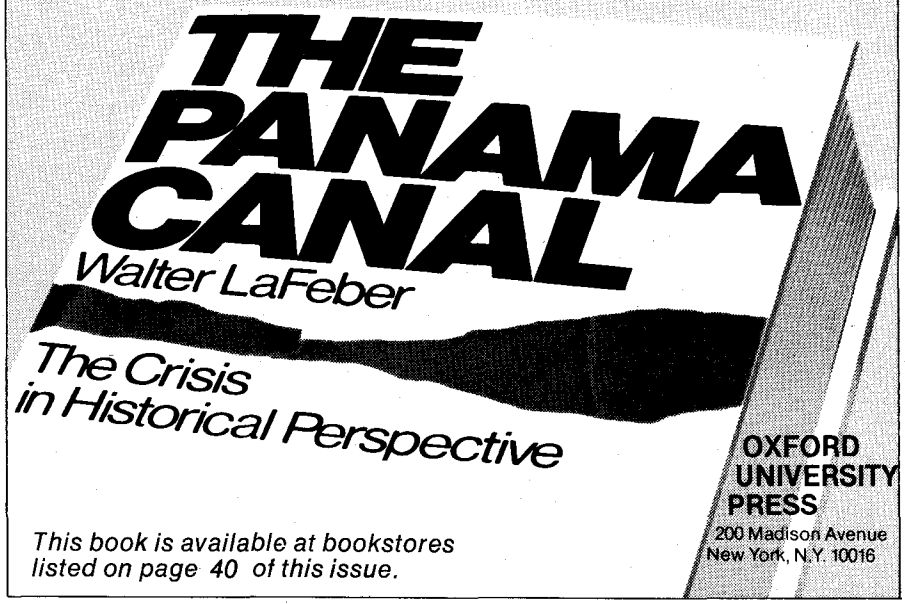

This book is available at bookstores listed on page 40 of this issue.

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Mary looking for—in life? in love? What about the headaches that began soon after the birth of her first child and "usually coincided with the periods when she had nothing much to do"? And what exactly did she find in Curzon that kept alive her faith in love and allowed her to put up with so much?

Mary was beautiful, graceful, charming, and loving; she was not imaginative or brilliant. If she had been, concludes Nicolson, she would not have suffered as she did in London, and would have left a "deeper mark on the politics and intellectual life of India. Mary lacked dominance; and to some extent . . . she lacked judgment. When she was given a role, as a debutante in Washington, as a Vicereine in India, she played the part to perfection. Without it she was apt to falter."

What might Henry James have made of Mary Curzon? Is she Isabel Archer married to Lord Warburton? Isabel was after something more than the love of a kind, powerful man, and she paid a high price for her choice of a larger experience. For Mary, the love of a powerful, not very kind man was enough. It is not clear that the consequences of her choice—of Curzon, of England—etched in her a deeper or more interesting character.

Jean Strouse

Jean Strouse is writing a biography of Alice James.

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Tennessee Williams' Letters to Donald Windham: 1940-1965

(Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $10)

With the bookstalls currently awash with a flood of biographies and published letters, it seems only fair that reviewers be entitled to at least a tear drop of skepticism. If *Tennessee Williams' Letters to Donald Windham* does nothing else, it vindicates the skeptic.

Following so comparatively close upon the heels of Williams' *Memoirs*, the publication of these letters by novelist Donald Windham somewhat naturally arouses the reader's suspicions: what are the collector's motives? Not surprisingly, Mr. Windham's introduction never directly addresses itself to this important question. Instead, it succeeds in opening up a veritable Pandora's Box of related problems, contradictions, and ambiguities.

The first three pages of the introduction consist largely of a character sketch of the fledgling dramatist Windham met upon arriving in New York in 1940. Windham was 19, and for him, Williams "combined the heroic fortitude of a Stephen Dedalus with the lovable ineptitude of a Wilkins Micawber." To this sketch Windham adds the first of many troublingly unequivocal statements which are to appear throughout the rest of the collection: ". . . I gradually discovered that the emotions of the various characters [Williams] portrayed were always his own." In turning, at last, to the letters themselves, Windham writes: "To read them is to know why I liked him," thus striking the same self-congratulatory note which will later echo in such assertions as the one in which he claims to have given Truman Capote the title for *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.

Such relatively minor annoyances as these pale in the light of the fundamental contradiction which informs the greatest portion of the introduction and indeed Windham's editorial technique throughout the collection. On the one hand, Windham maintains that the letters of the 1940s, which comprise a good three-quarters of the collection, "are a running account of what (Williams) was doing and thinking, frequently day by day—a gold mine of

Tennessee Williams. The Bettmann Archive.

biographical information." Unwittingly pitted against this assertion, on the other hand, are Windham's repeated and judgmental references to those characteristics of Williams which make him, in Windham's words, "an impossible documenter." Specifically, he often speaks of Williams' "transference." One supposes that Windham is referring to Williams' ability to project his own guilt, need for condemnation, and the like onto the people to whom he was writing or speaking. Though the concept is never clearly defined or illustrated, Williams, we are told, is simply not to be trusted.

Paradoxically, Windham maintains that the letters "present the man who was there, dramatizing the way things were, a far cry from his version of the same events a quarter of a century later." Windham's insinuation that the *Memoirs* are highly inaccurate is quickly followed by his own claim that "in this introduction and in my notes which follow I have avoided stating anything I

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could not corroborate from old correspondence or journals."

Windham's quibbling, then, leaves the reader to assume that the primary motive in publishing these letters is nothing less than that of "setting the record straight." Ironically, however, his introduction insures that virtually all credibility is lost under a curtain of contradiction and petulance.

The reader can, of course, transcend Windham's editorial presence in the *Letters*, though some considerable effort is required. The letters themselves provide us with only the sketchiest biographical outline, but they profit from having been written during those interesting years when the playwright's star was definitely on the rise. Furthermore, it matters very little how self-conscious a letterwriter Williams was: in contrast to the *Memoirs*, Williams' epistolary poses are breaths of spring air.

As with any collection of letters, there is a good deal of chaff here. Williams has never played the Pollyanna, and because the medium allows him to be at his graphic best, many of the letters provide a playground for the prurient. (Careful readers may want a Dictionary of Sub-Culture Lingo at hand.)

On the whole, however, the letters display a remarkable range of emotions and information. In addition to scenes of backstage drama with Williams' many producers, directors, associates and lovers, we catch glimpses of Gore Vidal, Truman Capote, Christopher Isherwood, Leonard Bernstein, and Greta Garbo. Because he was and is so mobile, the settings change with as much rapidity as do the descriptions of them bubble with vitality and charm. Best of all, perhaps, is the chatty humor with which he adorns a good bit of his correspondence. During his short stint as a screenwriter at MGM, for example, Williams writes:

Donnie
I am terribly, terribly busy, my dear, what with my own writing and Berman's outfit crouching like hungry dogs outside my office door for scraps of scenes I toss out to them now and again for Lana Turner's new celluloid brassiere!

Editorial motives aside, these letters often make entertaining and informative reading.

William A.H. Kinnucan

William A.H. Kinnucan is a writer living in Washington.

Brief Reviews

Listening to Billy
by Alice Adams

(Knopf; $7.95)

The flap copy of this novel makes it sound like just another book about modern woman in search of herself. It's a lot more than that. Alice Adams has a sharp eye for character and place, and a gift for dialogue. Her characters really talk to each other. Eliza Hamilton Quarles may be on a quest for herself, but Adams sees her ironically and humorously enough to save the story from bathos.

Eliza Hamilton Quarles has all the earmarks of a modern heroine—daughter of a beautiful and successful journalist-mother, sister of an incredible beauty with the unlikely name of Daria, widow of a pathetic English teacher who kills himself in a New England hotel, she nevertheless takes herself in hand, moves to California with her daughter, and becomes a successful poet. In California she runs across a procession of types—film producer, irate feminist, failing star, rock drummer, and so on. It is the scenes in California that really come to life. Adams has a light touch here, satirical but compassionate. It's not a Joan Didion California she sees, but a place where people are still human in spite of all the fads and craziness.

Listening to Billie relies heavily on coincidence and intertwining strands of things like listening to Billie Holiday at most critical junctures. The coincidences do become intrusive at times, but this reader at least came to care enough about Eliza to be willing to suspend disbelief.

The Five Stages of Grief
by Linda Pastan

(Norton: $8.95; $2.95 paper)

Linda Pastan's fourth volume of poems is shaped by five stages of grief—denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. The poems talk about death, loss, falling off, and about coming to terms with all these things. Though the poems are spare and often non-specific, they

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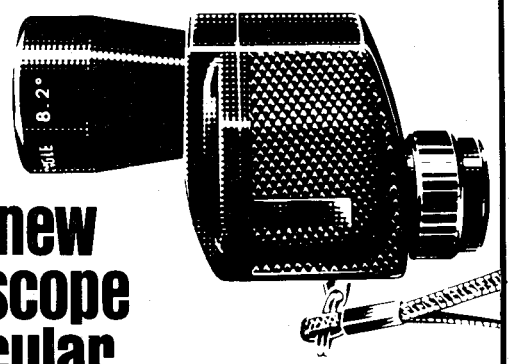

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are intensely personal. The epigram from *Richard II* may explain this quality: "You may my glories and my state depose,/ But not my griefs. Still am I king of those."

The voice in the poems moves from the denial of "Funerary Tower: Han Dynasty":

Today we visit my father's grave.
My mother housekeeps, with trowel
among the stones,
already at home here.

Impatient, even at forty
I hurry her home.
We carry our childhoods
In our arms.

to the voice of acceptance in "Old Woman":

When my griefs sing to me
From the bright throats of thrushes
I sing back.

In between, the poems look at marriage, at time, at children's homecomings and leavetakings, at death, at silences. Pastan is a strong, original poet who is not afraid to look at things squarely. This is a courageous book.

Trustable and Preshus Friend
edited by Jane Douglass
(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $10)

For those of you who have not heard of Elsie Leslie—"Everyone's Heart's Darling" according to Julie Harris's introduction—this volume of letters and photographs will come as a great revelation. America's first child star! Friend of Twain and Belasco and Helen Keller, even of pathetic little Eleanor Roosevelt! Drawn by William Merritt Chase, friend of Oliver Wendell Holmes! This child was an actress, playing such roles as Little Lord Fauntleroy and the Prince *and* the Pauper. And she was much photographed. The pictures make up a good deal of this very handsomely produced volume, and they are charming. In fact, the letters and diary entries are charming too, taken in small doses. You may join Mark Twain in saluting America's first child star:

I'll be your friend, your thrall, your knave,
I'll be your elder brother,
I'll be for love your very slave,
or anything you'd druther.

Catherine O'Neill

TRB, *from page 2*

failure for black students. And big-city high schools are in trouble.

The quality of education at some of these predominantly poor slum schools "is nothing short of a national scandal, an absolute disgrace," says Dr. Bernard C. Watson of Temple University, contributing a chapter to the National Urban League's new 204-page *The State of Black America: 1978* ($5). It's not only the disorder and violence, it's the tragic inferiority of the educational product given these disadvantaged, underprivileged children, usually black. High school graduates are unable to read, write or perform mathematical functions at the sixth and eighth grade level.

Republican candidates ought to be able to exchange melancholy sighs about this in talking things over with black leaders. The consequences of inferior high schools extend into college and graduate work. Blacks compose 11.4 percent of America's population, but their enrollment in law schools is only 4.4 percent; in medical schools, 6.1 percent; in pharmacy, 3.6 percent; in dental schools, 3.6 percent. Black health care needs aren't being met. For one thing there are so few black doctors, and few doctors at all in black slums. For another, one third of the nation's poor aren't covered by either Medicare or Medicaid. Infant mortality among black babies is twice that of whites. That would be a touching point for Republican candidates to bring up, while campaigning through ghettoes.

Blacks don't live as long as whites. In the natural apartheid of American ghettoes, in old, crumbling, rat-ridden housing, the kids may join a teen-age gang at 12, puff pot at 13 and maybe do time in jail for pushing dope before 20. Black male life expectancy is presently 62.8 years; for white males it's significantly higher—68.9 years.

Russians, of course, sneer at this illustration of US human rights. But Republican leadership, thank goodness, doesn't have to worry about Russians. Its job is to get black votes—and balance the budget.

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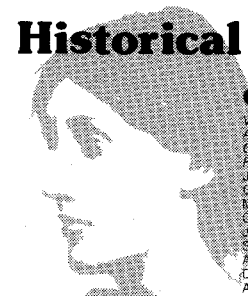

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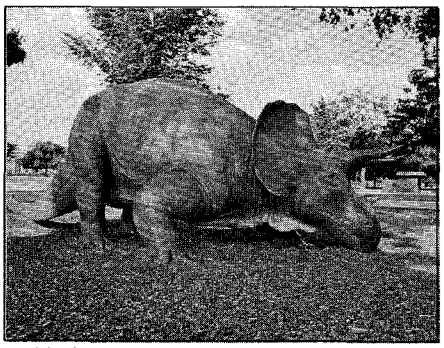
For the past 17 years, since John Kennedy (b. 1917) was elected, we have been told that if only we were led by men born in this century, we would enter a new world. His election helped to persuade the British to elect Harold Wilson (b. 1916), who was followed on this side of the Atlantic by Richard Nixon (b. 1913), at which the British counter-attacked with Edward Heath (b. 1916). America then brought up Gerald Ford (b. 1913), and the British at once reached to James Callaghan (b. 1912). At last the Americans decided to get past the First World War, and elected James Earl Carter, Jr., (1924), who is exactly the same age as myself, so it is not his age in actual years I am criticizing. All of these have been recommended to us as men born in this century. Yet how little they seem to be or to have been in command of it, compared with Winston Churchill (b. 1874) or Franklin Roosevelt (b. 1882) or Charles De Gaulle (b. 1890). It is in these that one feels the fount of youth. As this century totters to its close, the Western democracies have yet to produce one outstanding leader who was born in it and who also has its events by the tail, who does not govern like an old maid. With Jimmy Carter, my exact age-group has supreme power. At the end of his first year in office, he makes his and my generation seem timid.

I have considerable admiration for many of Carter's qualities. If I do not still believe in him, I still manage to have some hopes of him. But at the end of his first year in office, and after listening to and studying his messages to Congress, I find it depressing that there is so little spunk in a man. He acts in office like a maiden aunt, lace up to his neck, especially when he has gentlemen callers from business, but one who occasionally has hot flushes, when he pours the tea into saucers, and says in explanation that he is very fond of the old tea service, which he inherited from his grandmother. What bothers me about him is that he seems so very old, like all our leaders born in this century. This question of age in politics must be taken seriously. I'm not talking about actual years, any more than I was talking about the actual years of George Kennan, when I wrote a few weeks ago of the *special* senility to which diplomats are liable. When one talks of age in politics, one is talking of the mysterious factor of generations. It was Walter Bagehot who explained it to us. One may perceive a new generation when those who grew to maturity after some great event at last reach the positions of power. What is depressing about the new generations of this century is that, after all its tumultuous events since the First World War, they seem so palsied when they gain office.



Model of a Triceratops by Louis Paul Jonas, Smithsonian Institution.

I am beginning to think that politicians may be extinct, and this turns my mind, as my mind is always willing to be turned, to dinosaurs. By far the most interesting news in recent weeks is that reputable scientists have come up with a new theory to explain the disappearance of dinosaurs some 65 million years ago. No, they did not die of any single cause, such as their small brains, as we have believed for so long. A large number of factors, over several million years, contributed to their extinction, from the dramatic fall in the ocean level to the fact that they were warm-blooded, from the cooling of the land as the result of the fall in the sea level to the fact that they had no fur or feathers, from the opening of new land passages by which dinosaurs met more dinosaurs to the fact that their huge metabolic engines made them compete for food. That is the merest of summaries, but what is interesting about these new speculations, based on research with all the new technologies that are available, is that there is not one lesson to be drawn about conservation or the ecology or the environment now. Science is so gifted and rewarding when it is not propagandist, and here are these scientists telling us quietly that there was nothing dramatic about the extinction of the Triceratops, the last of the dinosaurs, a process which took place over a period of two million years.

So if the politician is in danger of extinction, as has long been predicted—and as the record of politicians born in this century, culminating in the performance so far of Carter and his assistants, makes me gloomily think may be true—there is no one cause, and we certainly cannot put it down to the evil consequences of a spreading democracy. But among the causes will be the increasing pusillanimity with which journalism engages in its discourse with politicians. I never cease to be amazed when I—or any other hack in Grub Street with me—is accused of arguing *ad hominem*. Since politics is things said and done by people, how can one not argue *ad hominem*? The great journalists of Grub Street, which is where we come from and where we belong, tore politicians limb from limb with their words, and were willing to go to jail for it. One does not mean gossiping about a politician's sex life or about how much he makes from lecture fees; and what is called investigative reporting is a poor substitute for dictating the language of politics solely by one's words. Of course my criticism of Kennan was *ad hominem*; if it had not been it would have been *ad nauseam*. Politics and politicians live by words—free government is wordy government—and we had better be in there pitching our words *ad hominem* against theirs.

This is a one-track diary, but even diaries must follow the mind, even if it leads a while down only one track. The feeling that Hubert Humphrey may have been the last of the Triceratops is not confined to me. When his death was followed by the mish-mash of the State of the Union message, and the equal mish-mash of most of the comments on it, one may be allowed to call attention to the one consistent characteristic in all politicians in the past: they made prose sit up. In a bleak and cold age for free societies, when the sea level which once warmed them has fallen dramatically back, words are the fur and feathers of our politics, and they are not being used.

H.F.

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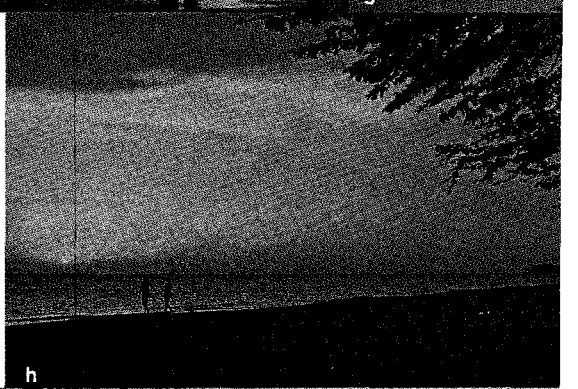

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